

PUNCH, ESTABLISHED 1841

Punch

9^d





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Subscriptions

If you wish to have *Punch* sent to your home each week, send £2 16s. 0d.* to the Publisher, *Punch*, 10 Bowyer Street, London, E.C.4

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CHARIVARIA

A REPORT from Srinagar says that the decision to put on trial Sheikh Abdullah, Kashmir's former Chief Minister, was taken at "a hurried meeting" of the Cabinet, and may cause "political upheaval." But the Government's present policy is no doubt to try anyone once.

WITH space-fiction on the very brink of becoming space-fact, one informed source says that the first moonship pilot is likely to be a woman—"unglamorous, short, fat, tough and probably in her forties." Space-fiction addicts at last admit that science has gone too far.

POLITICIANS' speeches are becoming increasingly enlivened by verbal imagery, and though it is refreshing to see less and less of the stock stuff about war not being inevitable, doors still being open, going forward together, and so on, the



Minister of Labour's recent remark that "industrial relations must be kept at concert pitch" failed to hit entirely the right note.

"The Israeli Ambassador, Mr. Eliahu Elath, when his flight to Israel was delayed for nearly two hours at London Airport yesterday: 'Ah, well, it took Moses forty years to get to the Holy Land . . .'"

Daily Express

Scrappy complementary meals service too.

THE National Gallery's representative didn't make a single bid at that fabulous Sotheby's sale, complained someone. Just sat there, the boy in the in-the-red waistcoat.

BEFORE starting on a sculpture for the grounds of the new UNESCO building Mr. Henry Moore is said to have spent



six months "pondering on what UNESCO stood for." But the work will have to be finished before we can all see what it has stood for.

A TYPICALLY smug *coup de grâce* was given *The Times* letter-writer who complained that he now got only forty matches for twopence. Another one wrote pointing out that if he wanted as many as eight hundred for sixpence he had only to go and buy them in Belgium.

MAJOR STUART, who successfully crash-landed a U.S.A.F. jet in an Essex field, received enthusiastic tributes on his thoughtfulness and skill in guiding the machine away from the ancient church nearby. It is understood that he was only too glad to miss it.

Can't be Coincidence

THE cameras purred in the haunt of earls. The peeresses trooped to division. And both for the first time in history, Which raises a minor mystery: Did the television bring on the girls Or the girls the television?



Punch Diary

A NEW and in some ways far more likeable picture of life in Russia is beginning to emerge. Instead of drab hordes of earnest technicians, stolidly competing for the title of Stakhanovite and in their spare time hurling the discus incredible distances for the honour of their country, Mr. Khrushchev paints a surprising scene of rollicking hooligans reeling from bar to bar "disfiguring family life and damaging society." Their footballers, we already knew, were given to over-indulgence—and after their 5-0 defeat at Wembley a further bout of vodka or self-criticism or both seems inevitable. But that workers in the mass, in their social paradise, feel the need for excessive stimulants is something new. One must not exaggerate, of course; the picture is not wholly Bacchanalian. In the midst of this gay, disgraceful mob stands Old Sobersides calling his flock to order, proclaiming "the sternest struggle against drunkenness" and "an end of this evil." Others may totter, but Mr. Khrushchev stands secure. In the country of the blind, the one-tot man is king.

I Like Mac

THROUGH the years we have come to expect bizarre touches in American political campaigns, and I was not in the least surprised to learn that Bob Hope was engaged to "warm up" a Los Angeles audience recently before President Eisenhower addressed them. Since most American institutions find their way over here sooner or later—soft drink, bubble-gum, quiz games, neckties, breakfast cereals, pop music, comedians, haircuts, best sellers and all—I look forward with perfect

equanimity to the day when I shall see a hall full of electors being put in a jovial mood by Spike Milligan and a detachment of the Dagenham Girl Pipers before the appearance of Mr. Gaitskell through a star-trap, with a puff of red smoke. The Conservatives, of course, are in a rather stronger position and will be able to do this sort of thing more cheaply: no audience could remain glum or unfriendly when subjected to a ten-minute warm-up of quips, full-throated laughter and acrobatic bell-ringing by their own official Master of the Revels and Cheerleader Extraordinary.

The Nose Has It

MR. MIKE TODD, jun., promises us the smellies any day, and cinema audiences should soon be getting as many as twenty distinct aromas wafted into the auditorium during the course of a film. It was in Paris, in 1891 (before Mr. Todd's time), that "The Song of Solomon: A Symphony of Spiritual Love in Eight Mystical Devices and Three Paraphrases" was performed in the three dimensions of sound, colour and scent; and in 1892, in New York, there took place what was described as the first experimental perfume concert in America—"A Melody in Odours (assisted by two Geishas and a Solo Dancer)." So, in a way, Mr. Todd isn't on to anything new. Possibly the only edge he has over these early pioneers is

that there are more smells to go at than there were seventy years ago. Two things seem certain. The scent-disseminating mechanism will need a high amplification potential on the suburban circuits if the indigenous smell of oranges isn't to get the upper hand: and critics will for once be justified in saying that the show stinks without even having been to see.

The British Way

UNION Leader George Scott told the B.O.A.C. strikers "You have won a tremendous victory." As B.O.A.C. made no concessions and the strike leaders had abandoned at least one of their claims, "tremendous victory" has a curious meaning, reminiscent of the London bus strikers' similar victory earlier this year. Perhaps these are examples of the time-honoured practice of turning defeat into victory—as at Dunkirk—by just calling it that. Galsworthy had the whole sorry business tied up fifty years ago in *Strife*.

Playing to the Calorie

MR. HARRIMAN and Mr. Rockefeller, now in the closing stages of their struggle for the Governorship of New York State, are slugging it out salami to salami, cheese blintz to cheese blintz, as the cameras catch them devouring the pet dishes of various sections of the electorate. It is a wonder that the food factor hasn't entered into political campaigning before. The man who continually associates himself in the public mind with the popular practice of eating pledges his recognition of a basic truth about all voters—that they like to eat; it is the familiar "You know . . . and I know . . ." approach, but with the mouth full. Nevertheless, it must be hard work, in a highly cosmopolitan electorate, where Harriman's smiling demolition of a *Saltimbocca alla Romana* or *Rodgrød med Fløde* means Rockefeller's following suit or losing a bagful of votes. I wish them both luck, and may the best digestion win.



"No, but you'll manage the couple of hundred miles to the Lords to get yourself on TV."

SPORTING PRINTS

Next week the second of Hewison's drawings of sporting personalities will portray

MISS PAT SMYTHE



"Speak up, can't you?"

(Discussions on the suspension of nuclear tests are to begin at Geneva on October 31)

THE NEW BOOK OF SNOBS



In 1846-7 Thackeray wrote "The Snobs of England" in PUNCH, later reprinted as "The Book of Snobs." In this series snobbery is brought up to date, but the title decorations are from Thackeray's own drawings.

JAMES LAVER on Matters of Dress



AHUNDRED years ago "Snobbery in Dress" would have meant almost the exact opposite of what it means to-day. It would have announced a discussion of the clothes of the contemporary equivalent of Teddy boys, East-enders, bounders, cads. At that time *Punch* itself was still carrying cartoons like the one entitled "Snobs at the Seaside," that is, ill-bred young men who insisted on rowing too near the ladies' bathing place. It was Thackeray who changed the meaning of the word by writing a book about one particular kind of cad, but even he would have been astonished if he had been able to foresee that in the mid-twentieth century people would actually boast that they were snobs.

Well, we all think we know what a snob means nowadays, and we think that we can detect snobbery in almost every manifestation of social life, as indeed we can; and in no department is this more manifest than in the realm of dress. Perhaps we should at once modify this statement by saying that while snobbery has a slight influence on women's dress, its influence on men's dress is overwhelming. In fact it is almost the whole story. Men's clothes are class-conscious through and through.

To understand why this is so will take us into some pretty deep waters. Our clothes are not chosen by the conscious mind; they are dictated to us by the deepest unconscious desires of the opposite sex. This is a good reply to women who complain that men's clothes are drab: it is entirely their own fault.

It is probably safe to say that men, by and large, throughout history (and pre-history, for that matter) have chosen their partners in life by their attractiveness as women; and therefore women's clothes are designed to make their wearers attractive. That is why women's clothes are based almost entirely upon the Seduction Principle.

But women are more subtle and more profound than that. From the earliest times they have chosen their partners not for their attractiveness as men but for quite another reason. Woman's most fundamental desire is not the beauty of her mate but the safety of her brood. Now, in very primitive times this is best promoted by linking up with the biggest and strongest brave in the camp: the man with the broadest shoulders, the longest legs, the strongest arms and—incidentally—the most plumes in his hair and the most scalps at his waist. Such decorations finally harden into real insignia of rank, so that a mere warrior would no more think of wearing all the feathers worn by the chief than a modern naval cadet would think of wearing four gold rings round his sleeve. Men's clothes are in their origin and in their essence hierarchical. They are class-conscious even when, as clothes, they have hardly begun to exist.

Gradually civilization begins, which means, I take it, that the property of weaker men is protected; and soon the best buy, from a woman's

point of view, is no longer the biggest and strongest man but the man with most possessions, the man of broad acres, the man who is ultimately called the aristocrat.

He is distinguished from lesser men by his clothes, and his clothes say two things: first "I do not work." Strange how this element persists! We still wear white linen at wrist and throat—that is to say, the two places where it is most easily dirtied—chiefly to show that we have no need to engage in any kind of manual toil.

Aristocratic clothes also say "I have an unlimited number of women-hours at my disposal. These seed-pearls on my doublet, this embroidery on my coat, represent the eyesight of a whole generation of dependent women." This element is no longer present in male attire and the reason is that Aristocracy has been replaced by Gentility.

This strange transition is what is known to history as the French Revolution, an upheaval which, for all its fine phrases, was the beginning of

Plutocracy, the emergence of the power of money. Security—the security for which women are looking—now means "securities," and securities are things you keep in the bank and not things you put on your back. Since then all men not actively engaged in labour have dressed like bankers.

So far so good. But why should bankers dress just like that? What change really took place at the end of the



eighteenth century which determined men's clothes for the next hundred and fifty years? It was a victory for English country clothes over French court dress, a victory so complete that while France continued to dominate women's modes, men's clothes all over the civilized world became unmistakably English and remained so with hardly any modifications until modern times.

The anglomania of the men who made the French Revolution is one of the most astonishing things about them. When Americans looked across the Atlantic they saw only the old purblind tyranny from which they had escaped. But when the French looked across the Channel they saw much that appealed to their new craving for liberty. They saw that men did not pass their lives as courtiers fluttering round a king, but spent their time on their country estates, and most of their day on horseback. Of course we are speaking of the upper classes, but the French Revolution was largely an affair of the upper and upper-middle classes. And the men who made it saw in the English country gentleman something approaching their ideal of a free and happy man.

It is a well-known fact of psychology that if you admire a man, or a type of man, very much you tend to adopt his clothes; and this is exactly what happened at the end of the eighteenth century. The country gentleman's outfit: his boots, his breeches of stout cloth, or even of leather, his high-crowned hat with narrow brims (a primitive form of crash-helmet) and his plain cloth coat, cut away in the front to leave room for the knees when riding, gradually became the accepted clothes for every man, whether he lived in the country or not. The riding coat was adopted for ordinary wear, and it is one of the most astonishing facts in the history of costume that *we wear it still*, but now only on the most formal occasions, when we put on what is called full evening dress.

Since no Teufelsdröckh had yet arisen to expand his philosophy of clothes the people of the Regency were mercifully unconscious of what was happening around them. They might have concluded that although men's clothes had changed since the French Revolution the structure of society remained very much the same. Members of the peerage still expected and received a



"I certainly didn't dream she could revive the 'twenties to that extent."

special deference. The great landed proprietors still resided on their estates and played the part of petty kings in their own districts. To be "in trade" still bore a certain social stigma, although in practice the rising manufacturers and the financiers of the period found very few doors closed to them. What served to bridge the gap and to mask the change which had taken place was the new invention of gentility.

Gentility was a very interesting and typically English social phenomenon. In one of its aspects it might be called a conspiracy against aristocracy. For "the point of honour" it substituted GOOD FORM; and good form put it about that there was something ungentelemanly in being too conspicuous. The eighteenth century aristocrat had worn his

Orders as a matter of course, even in the day-time: the nineteenth century aristocrat stopped doing this; he was content to be a gentleman.

All gentlemen are equal: such was the maxim on which men like Brummell worked. This was the doctrine of gentility and its symbol was the top hat. At this height, it seemed to say, the world is a plateau, there are no peaks above this level. A military man might cover himself with gorgeous decorations and wear a feather in his hat, but a private gentleman looked like all other private gentlemen, whether he was the Prince Regent or Brummell, whether he was a peer or a banker.

Gentility was far from being the end of snobbery—in fact it was its beginning, in any self-conscious form. After all, it was the nineteenth century, not the

eighteenth, that invented the word snob. And in spite of all social changes it is still with us to-day, even if it is repudiated by our conscious minds. Snobbery in dress has merely become more subtle—and more all-pervading.

One can check this from everyday experience. That rather cross-looking girl who is waiting at the street-corner for her boy-friend—she is attractive or not to the degree in which her clothes succeed in embodying the Seduction Principle. But it is quite difficult to determine her class—until she opens her mouth, or her boy-friend, at last, arrives. Then one knows exactly.

The young man may be quite well-dressed. An observer from Mars might

think him better dressed than that rather shabby old gentleman who is just turning into St. James's Street. Yet one is on his way to a dance-hall and the other is going to dine at his club. The differences may be very subtle, but they are unmistakable none the less.

How long must this go on? Until, I think, the last relics of the patriarchal system are swept away and we are all living under the new matriarchy of the Mother State. Then, when women are completely emancipated (which is a polite way of saying completely industrialized) they will no longer look for security in the choice of a mate, and men's clothes will lose the element of snobbery which has governed them for

so long, and begin, like women's clothes, to obey the Seduction Principle. Then—we shall all dress like spivs.

Other writers in this series will be:

MACDONALD HASTINGS
PHILIP HOPE-WALLACE
SPIKE HUGHES
SIRIOL HUGH-JONES
LORD KINROSS
HENRY LONGHURST
THE REV. SIMON PHIPPS
STEPHEN POTTER
J. B. PRIESTLEY
PAUL REILLY
GEORGE SCHWARTZ
ANNE SCOTT-JAMES
GWYN THOMAS
FRANCIS WILLIAMS

At Last! The Death-Ray

By H. F. ELLIS

NOW that the death-ray has attained a new status by appearing in *The Times*—though admittedly within quotation marks and without a hyphen ("the possibility of generating a radio 'death ray' cannot be wholly ruled out" is how the paper's Radio Correspondent phrased his bomb-shell)—the term ought to be isolated and pinned down. We do not want any

loose thinking about so well-established a figment of the imagination, just when it may be on the point of turning into fact.

In its crudest form the death-ray is, of course, very old. The *idea* of it, that is to say. Medusa could slay at a fair range simply by uncovering her head, and one need not doubt that long before the days of the Greeks the desirability

of being able to kill without the constraint of tangible missiles had occurred to primitive man. Even if the activities of his own gods escaped his notice, he had only to stroll along the beach on an ebb-tide to observe that jelly-fish were totally evaporated by a hot sun in a matter of hours. The notion was there all right; all he lacked was the trick of it.

Centuries of obscurantist thought about spells, the sticking in of pins, and faces (or places) that were death to see (or enter) were to elapse before any real progress was made. Indeed, it is probably safe to say—though one would like to have a look through Leonardo da Vinci's notebooks before becoming categorical on the matter—that nothing really worthy of the name of a death-ray was imagined until the nineteenth century had almost run its course. By that time the physicists were busily discovering the properties of the natural rays, of light-rays, X-rays, cathode rays, and the way lay open. The death-ray took its place, at a single bound, in the front rank of sensational fiction.

I do not pretend to have made at any time a close study of the death-ray. Much research, many months of labour in the reading-room of the British Museum, would have to be undergone before any man could claim an exhaustive knowledge of this terrible weapon as it has been forged in the heated imaginations of thousands upon thousands of writers. But even a casual





"Well, I've come to see the Beverley Sisters, so there!"

acquaintance with a small fraction of the available sources emboldens me to set down what I believe to be the *essential properties* of the death-ray. I do not say that it is impossible to invent or imagine rays of a different kind that may be no less fatal; all I do say is that they will not be death-rays. The term has been fixed and sanctified by fifty years of imaginative endeavour, and these are the minimum requirements:

The ray must be invisible.

It must slay at a distance—not necessarily an infinite distance, but certainly (except in the case of small pistol-ejected rays for indoor use) at ranges exceeding a mile.

It must be directional. Something, some kind of generating or transmitting apparatus must be *trained* on the victim to obtain good results; a thing that merely sits and emanates, destroying everything within a radius of ten miles, is not a ray.

It must leave no mark. The best death-rays achieve this by utterly disintegrating whatever they are turned upon; but a dead body, provided it bears no trace of the cause of death, need not necessarily, I think, disqualify.

Its mode of operation must not be describable in any way that conveys any coherent picture to the mind. The *source* of the ray may be indicated with some appearance of detailed observation ("I had the impression of tangled wires connected to a block of some crystalline substance, resembling porphyry . . ."), but nothing even faintly intelligible must come out of it.

Its powers of penetration, though not limitless, must be considerable. Suggestions, of the kind sometimes made in inferior fiction, that a death-ray can be rendered harmless by the interposition of some special material or even an ointment, the secret of which is known only to the inventor of the ray, simply bring the whole subject into contempt.

It ought not to go round corners.

It must be instantaneous. This is a point of great importance, automatically ruling out as it does the effects of hot sun on jellyfish and other long-term fatalities due to radiation. Rays that take time to cause death are not only hopelessly unromantic, they already exist.

It must be spelt with a hyphen.

Such are the basic qualities and standards of performance demanded of a modern death-ray, and one has only to submit *The Times's* so-called "death ray" to the test of a point-by-point comparison to see that it falls short on at least two vital requirements. It is invisible, certainly, and directional ("The modern tropospheric forward-scatter radio link," declares the Radio Correspondent in a fine phrase, "operating with only forty kilowatts into a highly directional aerial produces a continuous beam of forty thousand kilowatts of energy, which makes it a hazard along the line of fire"). But its harmful range is, from all accounts, contemptible; and as for instantaneity, "the risk is similar to an excessive dose of diathermy, which can cause destructive deep-seated heating inside the body if prolonged exposure is sustained." Prolonged exposure, indeed! We are back at jelly-fish level. Sitting right in front of these radio links for a couple of hours is going to be about as dangerous as excessive sun-bathing.

It may be argued that the first practical death-ray can hardly hope to have all the swiftness and inevitability of the imaginary rays on which fiction-writers



have been working for fifty years. Let us go back then to one of fiction's early rays—for all I know the earliest—Wells's heat-ray in *The War of the Worlds*. This was not perfect by any means, it lacked the polish of later models. Its employment of heat simply to frizzle its victims was undeniably crude, it was unable to penetrate "a hummock of heathery sand," and one can only deplore the "whistling note" that it made as it swung about. But it had the root of the matter in it, for all its prototype imperfections. It was directional, instantaneous and fatal ("Whatever is combustible flashes into flame at its touch, lead runs like water . . . It was as if each man were suddenly and momentarily turned to fire"). It was invisible. Its source of power had precisely the right air of semi-describability ("Many think that in some way they are able to generate an intense heat in a chamber of practically absolute non-conductivity. This intense heat they project in a parallel beam against any object they choose by means of a polished parabolic mirror of unknown composition . . ."). And my goodness, it worked. You did not sit about in front of that thing, comparing your symptoms with those of a sufferer from excessive diathermy.

Even so, Wells himself, with a restraint that *The Times* would do well to emulate, declined to give his ray the full title. "Heat-ray," with a hyphen, was good enough for him.

Troubled Waters

By EVOE

WE cannot have the whole river Thames between Putney and Mortlake cluttered up with irregular argosies of Eights on the day of the University Boat Race. The thing is absurd. This is a national event, a cherished institution of a once Imperial folk. In all the corners of the world men pant to hear the result. Lumberjacks clutch at their newspapers, Polar explorers wait anxiously for the aeroplane that brings them the tidings, the tom-toms sound through the jungle . . .

When I was about ten years old I was waylaid in the suburb of a Midland town by a gang of boys who asked me whether I was Oxford or Cambridge. I doubt whether any of them had heard of a university or seen an oar. Unfortunately I gave the wrong answer. Immediately I was kicked and pumelled; my cap was torn from my head and trampled in the mud. This alone shows what a sporting encounter the Boat Race is. But an encounter for two boats, not for a flotilla. Not even for three boats, as several correspondents to *The Times* have justly observed.

The original declaration, the ultimatum if you like, is clear on this point. It was issued on March 12, 1829, in these words. "That the University of Cambridge hereby challenge the University of Oxford to row a match at or near London, each in an eight-oared boat, during the ensuing Easter vacation."

No precise statement was made about the waters to be employed for the purpose. But the choice fell on Henley, and later Putney acceded to the post of riparian renown. But enough of long words. It was a match, I say, for two boats, not more. Many things have happened to the Oxford boat since that year. In 1837 and 1838 it could not raise a crew. Once there has been a foul and once a dead heat. Once, but this was at Henley, Oxford triumphed without a bow oar. We have most of us seen her founder with all hands and start again. Three times, and three times only, the race has been rowed not on the flood but the ebb. Yet always it has been a race of two shells or shallops with whatever complement of enthusiastic voyagers.

And now the tradition, I gather, is challenged (at Merton of all colleges) by an outbreak of internecine strife; there has arisen a difference of opinion about training with the President of the boat club. One of the athletes has threatened to enlist a rival crew. His dear companions are ready to embark. He has a boat up his sleeve, or perhaps more accurately, in some convenient harbourage. At any moment the President may expect, somewhere on the Isis, to observe an emerging prow lifting the cool-haired creeper stealthily, and threatening to muck up the show. There he is! It is Mr. Rubin, the young light-hearted master of the waves!

Apparently there are thirteen ex-Blues resident at Oxford, with how many different views on training I cannot say. Within my memory the losing crew, and very often the winning crew, of the University Boat Race has always been wrongly trained, and there have not been wanting eminent men, often dignitaries of the Church, to explain more in sorrow than in anger what was wrong.

Rowing itself is a simple affair. "The oarsman," observes a sound authority, "sits with his face to the stern of the boat, his feet planted flush against the stretcher or foot-board, and the handle of the oar in his hands, the loom of the oar resting in the rowlock, the button being inside the thowl-pin." Thus imprisoned he must "sit upright with a rigid back and do his work mainly with his back and legs, swinging the body forwards from the hips straight towards the toes." And there follows about a column and a half of other trifling directions, easily grasped by the enraptured neophyte.

It is the passion for speed and the desire to emulate the grace of the water beetle on the surface of the flood that has induced the complications in the structure of the boat, the importance of the style, the diet, the psychology and the rhythm of the mariners, that have turned a pastime into a purgatory and a pleasant afternoon out into an Odyssey.

College crews, therefore, are much-enduring men, University crews much

more so. They should not be, they cannot be duplicated at the mere whim of a high-spirited privateer.

Let Mr. Rubin withdraw his interloping barque. Socrates would have urged it, Poseidon would have insisted. The Port of London Authority and the River Police are already embarrassed by the idea. Better that one or two malcontents should walk out of the boat during a race or be flung out, like hecklers at a political meeting. Better that some passionate giant should upset the coracle in mid-stream.

It is true that there are no rules for the University Boat Race, except those arranged in any year between the two Presidents themselves, and it is possible that the President of the Cambridge University Boat Club might consent to alter its terms of the naumachia, and allow it to be decided in sixteen-oared boats instead of eight. Possible, but not probable. Quiet flows the Cam.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

(Letters addressed to the Editor, unless specifically marked otherwise, may be considered for publication.)

To the Editor of Punch

SIR,—It is a pity that Mr. Atkinson and Mr. Searle did not have a chance to attend a "fun party" while they were in New York. The American family would have loved to have thrown one for them.

All Americans are members of a big, happy family headed by Uncle Sam, which causes a good deal of psychological confusion. Some accuse Uncle Sam of having had a high old time with Britannia, Italia, la France, and a good many ladies in other countries, especially Africa. But don't think he's a rich old uncle. He isn't. He's constantly running into debt supporting all those ladies. And he doesn't have a cent we don't give him.

While I'm on the subject of America, Lord Kinross's otherwise excellent article "Eat More Peat" (*Punch*, August 8, '58), contains a serious grammatical error. On page 465, line 6, Lord Kinross has said "Instant Peat, which tastes good,

as a mouth-wash should." It should read "like a mouth-wash should."

Sincerely,

New York

ADELE GREEFF

NAPOLEON

SIR,—I would like to correct the caption to Mahood's picture in your issue of August 13. What Napoleon said was not "It hurts here and here, doctor." It was "It itches here and here."

Napoleon's characteristic gait was due to the unfortunate circumstance that he was not only wounded in his campaigns but also picked up scabies, of which the doctors could not cure him. Scabies has a preferential localization under the girdle. This compelled Napoleon to keep his hands under his coat on the waist-line in readiness to strike.

Yours faithfully,

A. B. L. BEZNÁK, M.D.

Professor of Physiology

University of Ottawa



"They're detached of course."

FOR
WOMEN



Letter from an Aunt

BELFRY STREET,
CHELSEA, S.W.3

DARLING STELLA,—Terribly sad that you will not be paying me a visit during your next vacation, and sadder still when you tell me the reason. Indeed, to take all that trouble to winkle your way into St. Agatha's College, and then to decide that you wish to spend your vacation coming to grips with the horse; a well-known enemy of man, makes me feel it would have been wiser to let you learn the 'cello. I know I advised your mother against the 'cello. Indeed I said at the time "It's touch-and-go about that poor girl's hips. If the violin's no good, what about the double bass, which is at least played standing up?" But now when you tell me that the best that Greystone University can teach you is to squander your holidays learning to ride I feel like coming down and stunning the first don I meet with the inkstand-hoof belonging to that horse your great-grandfather kept eating its head off in the paddock for twenty-three years.

Apart from what it will do to your figure, my dear child, have you thought of the hideous discomfort of the clothes you will be forced to wear? I know that you think all a beginner needs is a pair of jodhpurs and a fetching yellow sweater, from which years later you will graduate into a Pat Smythe outfit. You have hopelessly oversimplified the situation. Riding, you will find, takes place always in extremes of heat or cold. Horses are friskier in cold weather when they slip you from an icy saddle on to the frosty grass, but in hot weather they mingle their sweat with yours, so one yellow sweater is either too

much or too little. It is for some reason fairly easy to stroll into a shop and buy a pair of jodhpurs. Lulled into false security you think you will slip along and choose a tweed hacking jacket. Before you know where you are the days of jodhpurs will be over and with a stock gripping your uvula in an iron vice you will be struggling with the component parts of boot-trees, obviously an invention of a chinese puzzle-maker at the top of his profession. Has that helpful Miss P. Smythe ever told us how not to force a right-hand tree into a left-hand boot? Of course the real snare is the seductive beauty of all clothes to do with horses; even the blankets they wear themselves are masterpieces of *chic*. Take one step into the sort of shop which sells scarves with foxes' masks on them and you will be lucky if you don't emerge dressed for a meet at Handley Cross. Not even at an ironmonger's is one's sales resistance lower, and I really beg you (I have seen what it can lead to) not to buy the sort of waistcoat that shouts out loud until you



have arrived at some sort of understanding with your horse. I don't expect you to be able to control him, but by thinking ahead a compromise can be reached, so that you don't ask him to do anything that he finds repugnant, and so he does nothing which will trail your plumage in the dust.

However, when I think of those nippy mornings on nappy horses my advice to you, darling Stella, is to stick to the university and leave the Cottesmore, Harringay and the Spanish Riding School to those who already know a martingale from a surcingle; and

if it's a rider rather than a horse that you have your eye on, let him love and ride away—so long as you don't have to ride away with him.

Your loving Aunt Susan.

VIOLET POWELL

☆

Dear Baby . . .

"**T**HINK beautiful thoughts" is the cry when Baby's on the way, and when mine had arrived I was still thinking them. I'd just about got him through Eton (scholar) and King's, and had him lined up for a Top Job when, bang, in comes nurse under a mountain of letters and sample-size parcels, chanting "Aren't we a lucky girl?"

I didn't know it, but apparently all the makers of baby clothes, scales, foods, prams, cots, soaps, bottles, bibs, collapsible baths, sylky-smooth powders, kot-kleen mattresses, plastic panties, potties and pinnies—to skim the top only—have been watching and waiting for this magic moment as eagerly as I. "There," they said to themselves, "is another dear little consumer unit, not to mention a new sucker parent with minimum sales resistance."

The number of things I simply can't do without is staggering; some seem two-edged. The Baby Alarm, for instance, a microphone contraption fixed over the telly, "will enable baby's cries, even breathing, to be heard." Charming background to "Panorama" perhaps, but how to explain to dinner guests that the heavy snuffling is not Aunt Clara's dog but "Baby's every sound"?

And—to polish off those thank-you letters—the acknowledgment cards, coyly depicting Baby naked and tiptoe, announcing himself through a letter-box, riding pillion behind a bicycling stork, or blowing Pan-pipes on a stile: the idea is sound, but how to face Baby

in years to come when he finds one tucked away in granny's treasure box?

Besides the manufacturers, seven insurance companies show flattering concern. One, in violet facsimile handwriting, begins archly "Dear Baby," and urges him, when he finds daddy in receptive mood, to tell this sceptic that "there is an answer to all his problems" (fuel bills, recession, mummy?), and one, what's more, which will "save him a lot of that HORRID Income Tax." Daddy is impressed until he reads the enclosed P.S. to himself which gives a lot of HORRID examples of other daddies struck by lightning or run over by buses.

The other six all ask the same prize question: "How will you educate your son?" and drive the point home with lists of astronomical school fees from Abingdon to Wrekin. If this seems premature, dear old G-bb-t-s and Thr-ng, living up to their motto "Promptly, yet carefully," are a jump ahead again, asking "Is the pupil to be prepared for any particular examination, public school, university, career or profession?" and "Do you wish the pupil to have special tuition in any subject(s)?"

Studying the pupil in question for any special aptitude(s), and remarking the size of his ears and sound of his voice, I am undecided whether to put down Pop Singing or the Bar. There are so many brilliant possibilities. Could those long sensitive fingers wield brush or violin? Those kicking legs excel in ballet or soccer? Do those episcopally clasped hands mean the Church? Are these the eyebrows of an admiral or of a television panellist?

But here I am, back where I started, thinking my beautiful, beautiful thoughts.

DAPHNE BOUTWOOD

☆

"Gwen, Lady Melchett, will go to almost any length to keep her faithful 65-year-old butler, Herbert Thompson. Just over a year ago she moved the kitchen of her house . . . from the basement to the ground floor and brought her dining room down from the first floor so Thompson wouldn't have so many stairs to climb. Thompson himself was given a basement flat. Now Thompson finds the steps up his flat to the kitchen too much for him. So Lady Melchett plans to move house . . . The Melchett family motto: 'Make yourself necessary.'"

News Chronicle

How about the Thompson family motto?

Shampoo and Set

"YOU'VE not been here before, have you, madam? No, I thought not. That's never one of our regular clients, I said to myself as soon as I set eyes on your hair. Of course we'll do our best to help you, but . . .

"How long ago did you say you had it permed? Only two months? Well, the perm looks pretty tired, I must say. You think it's because the hair is fine? Oh, no, madam. That's not what we call fine hair. Really fine hair can look absolutely beautiful. Yours is just tired and the ends are dry.

"Have you been trying to cut it yourself? No? Well, I only asked. There must be some reason for the jagged look at the back. Can I shape it to the same style as that lady over there? The one at the end mirror on the right? But, madam, that is a young lady. Her hair is healthy and naturally luxuriant. And her head is the right shape, too, if you take my meaning.

"The best advice I can give you is to have a course of our special cream shampoos, followed by reconditioning treatments and a new perm. Then we might be able to do something for you.

Expensive? Not really, madam. Nothing does more for you than a becoming new hair style. Not even a mink coat. And you'd hardly expect to get that for nothing, would you?"

FRAN STARR

☆

Bread

TOUCHED somewhat in the head
As I may seem,
I sing this modern bread
That's cooked by steam!

Hear me crack up this white,
Soft, fungoid (yes,
I'm perfectly all right)
Sponge-textured mess!

I praise, I do, I praise
The good it's brought
To British eating ways!
I mean, one ought

(Now home-baked bread's a must
For me and you)
To place the credit just
Where credit's due.

ANGELA MILNE



"I wish I had some of your interests, Doris."

The Voice with a Smile

By FRANK SHAW

Decline of a Salesman

WAR HAS BEEN PROVED
DISGUSTING, SENSELESS, MAD



EAST AND WEST ARE BOTH
TOO SCARED TO USE THEIR
NUCLEAR WEAPONS



SO THERE IS STALEMATE
AND PEACE



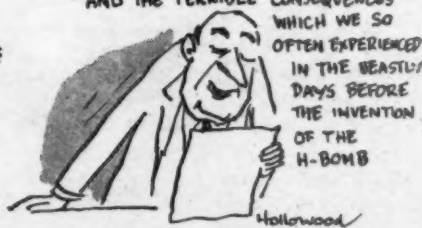
BUT CONVENTIONAL
WEAPONS ARE
DIFFERENT



WE MUST MULTIPLY OUR TRADITIONAL
DETERRENTS AND BRING THEM
UP-TO-DATE



AND SO AVOID AN ARMS RACE
AND THE TERRIBLE CONSEQUENCES
WHICH WE SO
OFTEN EXPERIENCED
IN THE BEASTLY
DAYS BEFORE
THE INVENTION
OF THE
H-BOMB



Hollywood

WHEN I was studying for the profession of vacuum-cleaner salesman in Manchester I spent my week-ends in my native Liverpool. There, on Saturday and Sunday evenings, my girl friend Flo, in the selling line herself, was prepared to listen to my recital of a two-hour demonstration (or "dem."). When I finally produced the pen and agreement she would even raise the Eight Possible Objections so that I could demolish them. Sometimes, I fear, I treated her rather as Skimpin treated Mr. Winkle. ("You say you can't afford it, madam? Ah, but you can afford to have the pile of your carpet destroyed by grit, to risk the health of your children and the comfort of your husband, and face the scorn of house-proud neighbours, etc."). Flo just sat quietly on the park bench, and at length she would yield to my blandishments and sign.

I was already well regarded at the school, with my earnest look—through plain-glass horn spectacle—and my persuasive tongue; I was fresh from the St. Francis Xavier's Young Men's Sodality Debating Society where I had once led in "Should capital punishment be abolished?"

Well-regarded by the principal, I mean. He was a little Newcastle man named Grigg who also wore horn spectacles as well as a spotted bow and a grey whipcord suit with broad lapels. He used an American accent. ("If she wants This and you sell her This you're a clurk. If she wants This and you sell her That you're a salesman. If she wants nothing and you sell her

This and That you're a super-salesman.")

Most of the students were much older than I, ex-servicemen mainly and rather rough-spoken in consequence; they were impatient of lecturing and wanted to get out and earn money. I had come into the game from desire, not need. I was completely "sold" on the project and I was soon proficient in every word of the model dem. through which the others could only stumble and stammer. I also fully accepted the slogans Mr. Grigg was fond of, such as "A customer's name is music in her ear" and "The voice with a smile wins." Most of my fellows were less enthusiastic.

Strangely enough when we went out into the Field, after graduation, these chaps often sold more machines than I. The first month I did well enough myself. Most of my sales were to people suggested by my mother, some of whom were ready to sign long before I was through the two-hour dem. and failed even to raise one of the Eight Possible Objections. Mrs. Dunn, of the Women's Guild—my mother was Secretary—even smiled when I broke a light bulb fixing the machine and dropped the cleaning attachments with a clatter just as I was saying "A child can use them."

Although we received no salaries we had nightly to fill in report forms which the older chaps faked up in a pub at six o'clock as they were having the "first to-day." My reports were conscientiously drafted, but Muldoon, the district manager, a large red tweedy man who had dismissed my first two successful sales with "mugs for luck," would chuck them on the tray without looking at them.

"Mr. Grigg always taught us," I began on Saturday morning when all the others were drawing their commission. He did not let me finish.

"Mr. Grigg's like the barber's cat," he declared. "Never sold a thing himself in his puff. Why can't you be like Gordon here and do a bit of work and less of this theory-izing?"

Gordon certainly sold machines, but he was no gentleman. His face looked as if it had been walked on, his clothes as if they'd been slept in, and he had the voice of a sergeant-major; it certainly had no smile in it. He treated "prospects" rather like a magistrate confronted by incorrigible delinquents. They probably felt they were lucky to get off with paying the pound deposit. He pointed an accusing finger at the evidence of their crime—the pile of dirt he tipped out on the floor: he always had some in the bag beforehand just in case. He had a good mind not to suck it up again. In fact on the few occasions when the tempting pen was rejected he did leave the pile there as he stalked off.

The fine ritual of the dem. he ignored, and he called them all Mrs. Whatser-name. In some houses, I came to suspect, he abandoned the set liturgy completely.

One day Muldoon sent me with him, to observe his methods, to a big house near Chester. The mistress of the house went out and left us with the maid. She was a hefty girl, a former land-girl from Scotland. Gordon at once claimed a close knowledge of her birthplace. When I had shown her the preliminaries Gordon went with her to clean the top rooms; I stayed below on a couch reading bound volumes of Victorian illustrated magazines. Presently from above came the sound of two voices yelling in unison a rather coarse song Gordon probably picked up at Poperinghe and she and her colleagues may have chanted on the lone shieling. When madam came back she consulted the maid and signed at once. He hadn't even had the machine upstairs. Madam paid cash too, which meant three pounds commission for Gordon.

Usually our commission was the pound deposit. From the sale of an eighteen-pound machine the district manager and the area manager also drew commission, as did the shop which displayed the machines (and where, on slack days, we did gratuitous dems. to whip up clients). When, therefore, an unscrupulous salesman told a housewife just to sign and pay the deposit and she could send the machine back in a month without paying more and she did and all forms of persuasion failed—short of the County Court which they shunned—the firm was out of pocket.

Even though they resold the returned machine as new.

But the firm was on a good thing and it could carry the dubious characters so often recruited. Few lasted more than three months. Then they would disappear with the demonstration model and set up as "speciality salesmen" in some other line elsewhere. Towards the end they would not be trying to sell, but hiring the machines out at ten shillings a day while they spent the afternoon at a sixpenny film matinée. At six they would make up their reports, inserting their lies between the spilt beer and the bits of meat-pie.

I did none of these things, but in the second month I was making no sales either. In fact I dried up from the night Flo said "Oh, you and your old Remova" and went out of my life for ever.

After a while, during the second month, it occurred to me that two objections had not been fully gone into by our professors. What is the real coercive answer to "I haven't a pound in the world, nor ten bob either" produced at the end of a morning when you have completely cleaned the whole house? Or for "You'll have to see my husband"? I had been able to bully poor Flo a little, but here I could not emulate Gordon and be rude to the wife about the absent, tyrannical spouse. Above all what is the answer when you go to see the husband and he throws you down the steps and the machine (described as "your bloomin' ould saxophone") after you?

I simply stopped trying. I started taking a day off, leaving my machine with the kind-hearted girl in the cut price tobacconist's. Into the Law Courts, round the Museum, behind the market where the linsey-petticoated women sell parsley and there are dogs in cages, gazing in the windows of secondhand shops; on fine days sitting in the park watching the boys catch jacksharps in the lake.

Then I would take another day, and soon I was like the boozer who resolves each morning to keep off it and each afternoon is as bad as ever. I stopped bothering to take the machine round even. Soon I began to forget what I had been trying to sell.

In some ways it was an ideal existence. When Muldoon finally told me to go I hardly noticed the difference at first.



Know Thyself?

OLD letters tied with ribbon hide
The secrets of the past;
The ups and downs and sighs and
frowns
Of love that didn't last.

Wonder if he remembers me,
Reads what I wrote to him?
Wonder if I should wonder why
I wonder which was Jim?

HAZEL TOWNSON

DIRECTORS on Trial

"WATCH IT, C.D.!" by Bernard Hollowood

HAVE you ever wondered how the leaders of industry and commerce spend their days? There are probably fifty thousand company directors in Britain and only a handful of them are occupied in being bound over, waiting to be bound over, or booking air-passages to the Bahamas. What are the rest up to?

Well, new light on this question appears in the miniature reproduction (below) of a page from the current issue of *The Director*, the lush and admirable magazine of the Institute of Directors. Here we have documentary evidence that directors (a) can write, (b) keep diaries, (c) are only human. This particular diarist (I will call him C.D.) makes but six entries in three days—a modest enough ration of appointments for a tycoon—so I deduce that he is taking things easy, giving his occupational ulcers a rest, recovering from smoked salmon poisoning or emerging from a nasty bout of alcoholic congestion. Next week, no doubt, he will be making up for lost time and playing hell with Miss Jones, the Board of Trade, and the company's advertising agents.

On October 30, C.D. will be at the Festival Hall to hear Lord Chandos, the Chancellor of the Exchequer and others,

The surviving handful of British citizens who are not yet company directors will be surprised to learn that the Institute of Directors publishes a house-magazine of its very own, **THE DIRECTOR**, a fat, luxurious monthly sent free to all its members. These pages give some idea of its quality.

and during the discussion he hopes to ask a question about the ruinous level of taxation. He can almost hear the applause now. Lord Chandos will lean over to Sir Richard Powell and say "Who's that chap, eh? Pretty searching mind for a youngster of fifty-odd. Do with men like him on some of my boards." Yes, C.D. may ask that other question about German competition. Thursday will be quite a day.

On Friday, October 31, C.D. aims to get to the office rather later than usual, and the morning will be spent, apparently, in asking Miss Jones about scent. It is Mary's birthday and C.D. never knows what to give her. But scent is safe, and Miss Jones is pretty knowledgeable. In fact it will be pleasant to talk to Miss Jones about something so acutely feminine as scent. Smart chick, Miss Jones. Might even call her Miranda for once; does no harm to raise a secretary's hopes once in a while, especially when really efficient secretaries like Miss Jones are capable of pulling down £800 or £1,000 a year with other companies. Why not a very small bottle for Miss Jones while he's about it. Same scent of course. Might avoid embarrassment one of these days. Never know.

At 12.45 p.m. C.D. has to meet David and Charles at No. 10. But does the entry mean 10 Downing Street, 10 Bouverie Street or 10 Belgrave Square, the headquarters of the Institute of Directors? If C.D. is visiting Downing Street could it be to see Sir David Eccles and Dr. Charles Hill? Surely not, I mean . . . well, not with those ulcers. Bouverie Street? Possibly. We have directors popping in at *Punch* Office at all hours to ask about the meaning of some abstruse joke or recondite literary reference, but who are David and Charles? C.D.'s bodyguards? No, the No. 10 in question must mean Belgrave Square. My guess is that C.D. wishes to get to the club to hear what members have to say about his questions at the Conference. "Well, thanks, old man, nice of you to mention it. I just thought it *needed* saying. Could have said a lot more, but I didn't want to hog the show. After all it was Chandos's party really."

At 3.30 p.m. C.D. attends a sales conference, and, wow! it looks as though there's trouble brewing for somebody. Look at that parenthetic comment.

(? Figures for West Country??)

A man doesn't use *three* question marks unless he's pretty well steamed up about something. If that West Country representative is there at the meeting my guess is that he can start explaining right away. And my advice to him would be to blame the filthy weather, the road bottlenecks outside Bristol and Bridgeport, regional unemployment and a nasty attack of 'flu.

At 8.15 this same Friday C.D. has a date with Henry at the Savoy Grill. Now I find this significant and disturbing. Has C.D. forgotten that it is Mary's birthday? And if so, does he

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 1958		NOTES
30 Thursday		
AM		Royal Festival Hall all day —
Lunch		Institute of Directors Conference
PM		4. Sales Conference 10.00 — sharp
Evening		
31 Friday		
AM		XX — Mary's Birthday 'scent' — ask Miss Jones.
Lunch		David and Charles — No. 10. 12.45.
PM		3.30 Sales Conference (? Figures for West Country??)
Evening		8.15 — Henry, Savoy Grill.
1 Saturday		
2 Sunday		
AM		Kempston Park.
Lunch		
PM		
Evening		

October	November
S 5 13 19 26	S 2 9 16 23 30
M 6 13 20 27	M 3 10 17 24
T 7 14 21 28	T 4 11 18 25
W 1 8 15 22 29	W 5 12 19 26
T 2 9 16 23 30	T 6 13 20 27
F 3 10 17 24 31	F 7 14 21 28
S 4 11 18 25	S 8 15 22 29

think that a measly bottle of scent will placate her? Think, C.D., old man! Oh, yes, I know, Henry is good company and a real live wire with lots of funny stories (what was that one about the psychiatrist?); but think, C.D., of the gastric juice situation. You know very well that under the eagle eye of Pierre, the waiter, you will be unable to dine on less than a dozen oysters, steak and french fried, and *crêpes suzettes*, to say nothing of the Chablis, *claret* and brandy. Is it worth it, C.D.? And remember you'll have that bottle of scent pressing into your ribs all evening, reminding you that your poor wife is sitting all alone (except for Denise Marchmont) at the Ivy, eating oysters, steak and french fried, and *crêpes suzettes*.

On Saturday, November 1, C.D. is going to Kempton Park, and I don't approve. Company directors shouldn't advertise their pleasures in diary entries. Diaries can be used in evidence. "You hold inequitable taxation and school fees to blame for your present plight, Mr. C.D.?" says the Official Receiver.

"I do," says C.D.

"You have never indulged in betting and gambling?"

"Certainly not."

"Ah, then may I draw your attention to your diary for November 1, 1958 . . ."

Watch it, C.D., watch it.

For the DIRECTOR'S Bookshelf

TWO ANONYMOUS MASTERPIECES

Expenses and Benefits

(Institute of Directors)

THIS long philosophical poem is undoubtedly the finest thing of its kind since Eliot published the *Four Quartets*.

It falls into two sections, the first based on the traditional folk-law of the Income Tax Act, and the second, in brilliant contrast, dealing in bold and imaginative fantasy with Man's relationship with the tax inspector.

The first section takes the dry, earthy prose of the classic source and out of it builds up, by restless pursuit of every concept that arises from the all-embracing philosophy of the great Act, a picture of directorial existence in which bald, almost commonplace, truths are transfigured into something almost beyond the comprehension of ordinary men. The anonymous author writes in what appears to the eye to be prose, but his words fall irresistibly into the cadences of verse:

The claim should show in reasonable detail:

Travelling expenses—rail, sea and air fares.

Car running expenses.

Hotel expenses—food and accommodation.

Entertaining expenses.

Sundry expenses.

It is in the second section, however, beginning subtly and unheralded at the tenth stanza, that the poet's fancy really takes wings; from here until the end of the poem he traverses the whole gamut of directorial experience. He pins down the essential pathos of "Dispensations":

The authorities at present refuse dispensations for entertaining expenses And for travel involving absence abroad;

then turns to the gay humour of "Conduct of Negotiations":

In cases, however, where an inspector appears intractable,

It may be better to avoid an interview And so compel the inspector to commit His views to writing.

I do not know when I was last so moved by a poem of this length and scope. Directors and inspectors alike will eagerly await the next work from this talented writer.

Health Problems of Directors

(Institute of Directors)

With the publication of this short work of fiction its author leaps at once into the front rank of contemporary writers. He has produced a portrait of a man, a company director, affluent, influential, outwardly contented, yet dogged by a hypochondriacal certainty that his constitution is collapsing under the strain of thirty-five unrelenting

hours of work every week, that is at the same time slightly ridiculous and intensely moving.

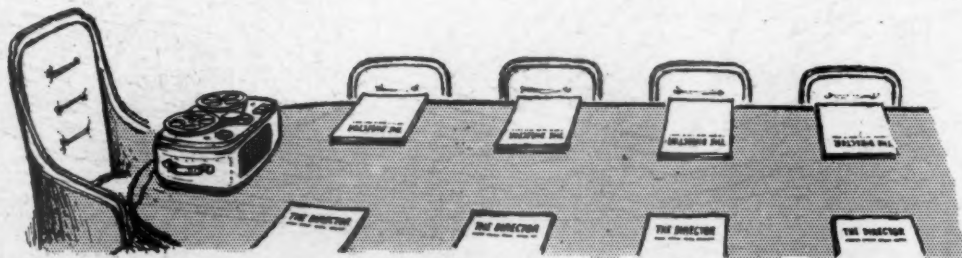
The unnamed hero gives expression to his *Weltanschauung* early in the story. "The Americans," he exclaims, "are exuberantly ahead of us in this respect. They consider that their executives are both valuable and at least potentially unhealthy."

From this moment he becomes increasingly obsessed with his physical condition. Is he slipping under the stress of too much responsibility? Does he depend too much on the work of his juniors? Is he adequately maintaining his *amour propre*? Is he falling below his own self-imposed standards?

Helpless in the grasp of his neuroses, he flounders this way and that in an attempt to shake them off. He cuts down his smoking, he stops taking work home, he sleeps for half an hour after lunch, he takes six weeks' holiday in the year, he travels by boat instead of by air.

It would be unfair to the author to tell how his story ends up. But it can be said without reserve that this pathetic director, helpless in the unshakeable grasp of his executive functions, is a figure as moving as Graham Greene's Scobie, as tragic as Waugh's Captain Grimes. No company director can afford not to read this book.

B. A. YOUNG



Toby Competitions

No. 40—For Directors

COMPETITORS are asked to assume that they are senior executives and have received a letter from H.M. Inspector of Taxes requesting details to justify a claim for £2,000 expenses. Originality will be at a premium. Limit: one hundred and twenty words.

A prize consisting of a framed *Punch* original, to be selected from all available drawings, is offered for the best entry. Runners-up will receive book tokens to the value of one guinea. Entries (any number but each on a separate piece of paper and accompanied by a separate entry token, cut out from the bottom left-hand corner of this page) by first post on Friday, November 7, to TOBY COMPETITION, No. 40, *Punch*, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.

Report on Competition No. 37 (Last Words)

The request for three sets of last words to be spoken by any celebrities, living or dead, evoked an enormous but rather unimaginative response, ranging from Adam to Dr. Werner von Braun. Apparently the pleasure of contemplating other people's misfortunes obscured in competitors' minds the ideal that last words should be original, appropriate

and funny. Lady Docker just pipped Shakespeare in the obsequies stakes, with Noël Coward, Sabrina, Winston Churchill, Bertrand Russell and the Archbishop of Canterbury in a tight ruck behind. Several chestnuts (including those of a few competitors who contrived to send a flat-race jockey over the Styx) eliminated themselves; our apologies for any that remain.

The prize has been awarded to:

GRANVILLE GARLEY
15 DORIC AVENUE SOUTH
FRODSHAM, CHESHIRE

one of the two entrants to produce three acceptable hypathanatologies, to wit:

J. H. WARDLE: "Now for Lord Hawke..."
NODDY: "Don't let poor Enid starve."
ELY CULBERTSON: "I pass."

The only other competitor to be in at three deaths was H. E. Slaymaker, Grafton Villa, near Hereford, with

D. R. JARDINE: "The game isn't worth the scandal."

LADY DOCKER: "The fame isn't worth the scandal."

MARK ANTONY: "The dame isn't worth the scandal."

To him goes a book token, and to the first five of the following:

COLUMBUS: "Mea culpa, mea maxima culpa, mea maxissima, super-stupendissima

culpa."—Rev. W. A. Passmore, 111 Glasgow Road, Batgate, West Lothian.

CONSTANCE SPRY: "Someone else can arrange this."—Peter M. Richards, Donkey End, Blunham, Bedford

NOËL COWARD: "I think He'll be too, too divine."—K. G. Whiteley, 33 Heathclose Road, Dartford, Kent

BRIGITTE BARDOT: "I've left a lot undone."—Dr. T. R. Cullivan, Willesborough Hospital, Ashford, Kent

LADY LEWISHAM: "That handkerchief is filthy, dear."

MARILYN MONROE: "Lashes to ashes and bust to dust."—J. P. Pinel, 67 Horn Park Lane, Lee, London, S.E.12

XIMENES: "I have had my Romany Girl, closely followed by an afterthought."—William McCrea

THE DUKE OF BEDFORD: "See that they charge a shilling a head for my lying-in-state."—Dr. R. Pakenham Walsh

PRESIDENT EISENHOWER: "The last hole, in one stroke."—Pierre Wechter

ARTHUR ASKEY: "Halo, playmates!"—Marjorie H. Hughes

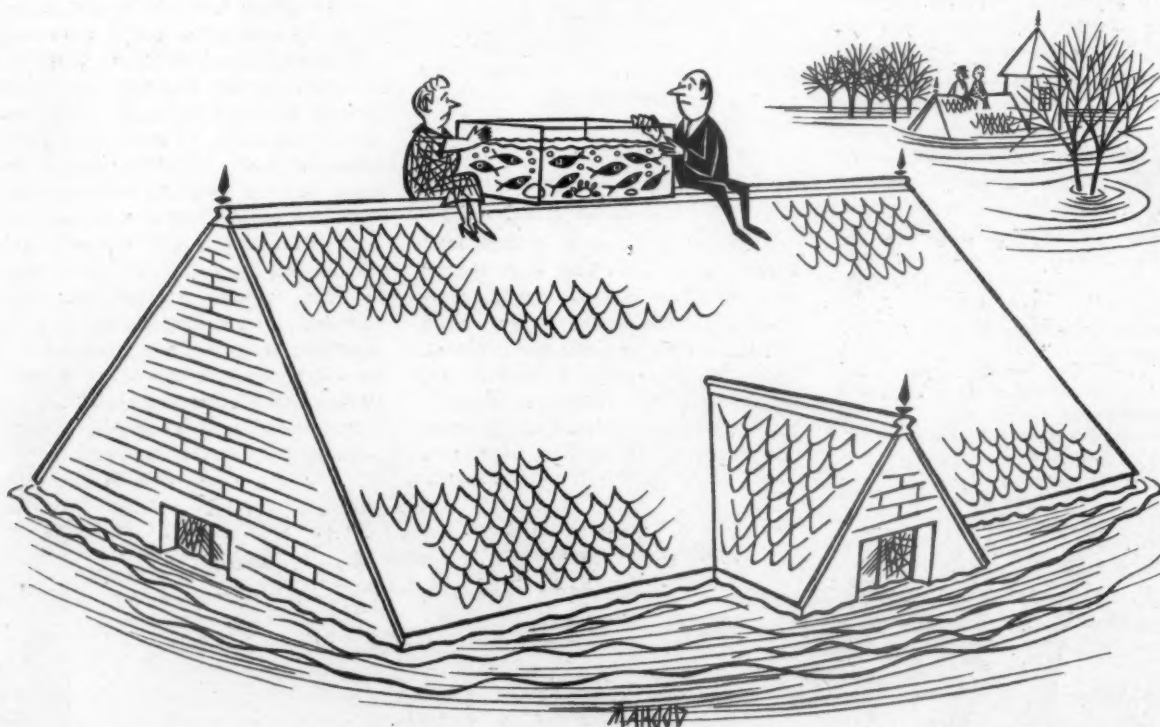
DEAN SPOONER: "O Lord accept my hole in seven."—G. D. Shepherd

JO GRIMOND: "How unusual to be joining the majority."—Henry Pelling

KING ARTHUR: "In—out! In—out! In—out!..."—V. R. Gardner

G. B. SHAW: "Letters! More Letters!"—Stanley Ridge

LIBERACE: "... and all over the lid, beautiful candles in silver candlesticks."—Peter Gardner





Further adventures in the United States by the Man who has Never Been There

5

WAY DOWN WEST

THE West holds many surprises. For instance, when I was a boy the fact that Harold Lloyd first saw the light of day in Colorado was accepted in my immediate circle as a matter of common knowledge; but if you had tried to persuade us that the world's biggest Swiss cheese factory was in Wyoming we would have laughed up our sleeves. It has taken me more than forty years to find out how wrong we would have been, for there was this Swiss cheese factory as large as life, with the milkmaids snoring in the bunkhouse and the jerk-line skinnners serenading them under the window with home-made guitars, and I was dumbfounded. Thus does travel broaden the mind.

Another surprising thing about the West is that it *isn't* the place the young men went to when the old men cunningly said "Go West, young man" so that they could have all the blondes in Manhattan to themselves and thus give rise to Peter Arno. The place the young men actually went to was California, and we all know what *that* gave rise to. People sitting around in the desert injecting one another with benzedrine and going into comas.

First things first, however: we are

not in California yet. The West is quite different. For one thing Gary Cooper was born in Montana, and the Westerners have been saying "Yup" ever since. They also tend to have uranium in their backyards, but not nearly so much as the Blackfeet Indians, who have it under their wigwams and are frequently prepared to let it stay there. Again, Westerners live with their shirt-sleeves rolled up and are less complicated than Easterners. They are not too proud to settle for a sedan instead of a convertible if need be, and they are not afraid to call a maverick a maverick. They walk as though their feet hurt—another Cooper influence. They will shoot you down like a dog one day and invite you round for flapjacks and molasses the next, with hominy grits and blueberry pie on the side. They live mostly in ghost towns, where their grandfathers died without taking off their boots, fighting posses, claim-jumpers, friends, neighbours, train-robbers and the Flathead Indians. So many of them are descended from participants in the Battle of Little Bighorn River that according to my calculations General Custer's gallant little band amounted to just over a division, and I can't see why he didn't drive those Sioux clear up into Saskatchewan.

THE West also contains Utah, one of the few States I know that hasn't had a song written about it, presumably because it doesn't even rhyme with pewter. (Come to think of it, though, Ohio doesn't seem to rhyme with

anything special, and yet there is a splendid song about Ohio, containing the following lines:

*Ohio, Ohio,
If I had the money that I owe there,
I would take a train
And go there.)*

Utah wasn't much of a place at all until Joseph Smith made up his mind to populate it, but he certainly got things moving. In fact if he hadn't been discouraged Utah might have stretched half-way across to Rhode Island by now, with the tobacco industry on its last legs and the whole course of history at sixes and sevens. As things are, I found Utah to be an orderly, well-run place, with molybdenum diggers digging for molybdenum, farmers growing sugar-beet, and Latter-day Saints drinking cocoa. They also have a lot of dinosaurs. I had seen nothing like them since my visit to Yale, and I was assured that if they weren't the biggest in the world they were the oldest. I am getting sick and tired of all these dinosaurs. I personally believe that they are made in New Jersey, the whole pack of them, like everything else, and shipped out in crates with packets of screws and assembly instructions and a mimeographed line of spiel for official guides, F.O.B. Detroit, and I said so.

"Also," I said, "I am beginning to have my doubts about some of these stalactites and petrified forests and Inca burial mounds and so on. What with plastics and scotch tape and everything you people could run up a whole scenic

wonderland practically overnight, and I wouldn't put it past you. Now, with a thing like Westminster Abbey," I said, "it's a different matter. You know where you *are* with Westminster Abbey."

But you can't shake the Latter-Day Saints. "When a man is tired of dinosaurs," they said kindly, "he is tired of life."

In Utah I was taken to see some baseball. I believe my hosts expected me to be astounded, but I found that the game was played exactly as in England. True, there was a parade of drum-majorette baton-twirlers in bathing-costumes, and the military band of the local branch of the Daughters of the Revolution ran about the field playing selections by Victor Herbert at half-time, dressed as horses; but apart from that I noticed very little that seemed at all out of the way, and I soon took for granted the fact that everybody wore racoon coats and threw empty pop-bottles at the referee. It was a very gay scene. The spectators chewed popcorn and waved triangular flags marked with symbols like CBS and WKO2, and the Latter-day Saint on my left kept giving me strawberry milk-shake from a hip-flask. Altogether I felt exactly like Scott Fitzgerald.

The game itself lacked drama. The Midgets scored first with two runs in the second inning. Grimaldi flied out, Murphy walked, Schiaparelli hit a homer into the lower centre field stands, Schuyler doubled along the left field line, Rizotto rolled out to third, and Smith was out on strikes. A very familiar pattern, as you see. After that O'Grogan hit his second home run over the scoreboard into the bleachers, and Mayevsky walked. Zuckermann hit into a double-play and Garcia scored after an infield hit, with two men on third, Murphy still walking, Mayevsky sneaking home, and the second base umpire appealing against the light. It was all fairly routine stuff, but since I felt bound to show some enthusiasm I clapped from time to time, calling out "Bravo!" My hosts were delighted.

SOME days later I went to Montana, which is pretty well overrun by Rockies and has earthquakes into the bargain. The Rockies are such good tourist bait that the earthquakes are rather played down in the brochures. Another feature they don't boast about

is the presence of Abominable Snowmen, and I can't say I blame them. I met one in a cabin half-way up Mount Cleveland. It was just over five and a half feet tall, with glasses. It had a musquash coat, no tail, and a woollen hat with a bobble. It said its name was O'Hara, and almost before I had set foot in the place it was trying to sell me insurance.

Montana is said to be bigger than Japan. Whether this is an advantage or not is no real concern of mine. As a matter of fact it might also be said to be less noisy than Japan; and I have always understood that dude ranching, which is a major industry in Montana, plays a relatively small part in the economy of Japan. But there, it seems to me, the comparison ends.

I next visited Wyoming, long famous for its little grey homes. You still have the Rockies to contend with in Wyoming, but there are plenty of flat parts if you take the trouble to look for them. I entered the State early one evening, riding side-saddle on a second-hand burro and suitably dressed in an off-white ten-gallon hat, a bandana sweat-rag, suede chaps, a leather-fringed waistcoat, sensible shoes, dark glasses, a red flannel shirt, revolving spurs, buckskin gloves, snakeskin braces, shark-skin trousers, and an ammunition-belt containing a sack of Bull Durham, a fifth of bourbon and some clean socks. The rest of my equipment—blanket, deck of cards, coffee-grinder, billy-can, fishing-tackle, geiger counter, trenching tool, anti-gas ointment, Colt '45, Cherokee phrase-book, branding-iron, water-bottle and mouth organ—were lashed to my pack-mule by lariat, and as I toiled at last up the main street of Cheyenne an old deputy sheriff came lurching out of Clancy's Select Bar and Livery Stable and shook me by the hand. "Doggone," he exclaimed with tears in his eyes, "if it ain't Hoot Gibson!"

I was to encounter the same kind of friendliness all over the West.

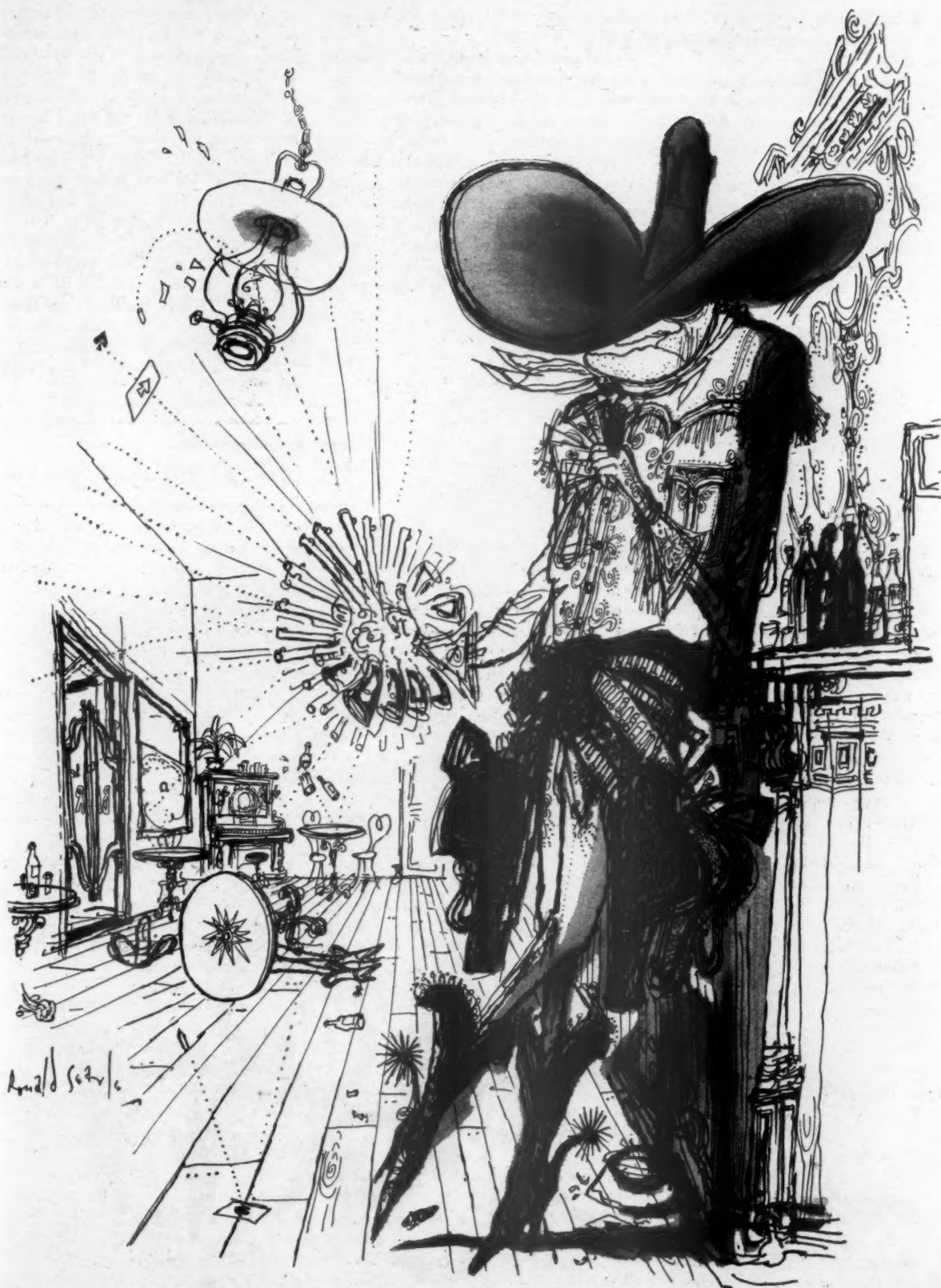
In Wyoming I stayed with a rancher called Red, whose daughter wore a dimity gown and was in love with the foreman. Like most of his fellow-countrymen, Red was a great joiner. Joining had been his hobby ever since he left high school, and he was already a member of the Simpler Spelling Association, the American Society of Whigs, the Benevolent and Protective

Order of Elks, the Izaak Walton League of America, the International Concatenated Order of Hoo Hoo, the Save-the-Redwoods League, and the Society for the Perpetuation of Circus Street Parades. "A guy gets lonesome," he explained, "out here under the stars. This way I feel I *belong*."

Wyoming is in the whittling belt, and at night Red and I would sit on the tail-board of a chuck wagon, singing cowboy ditties, with a knife and a lump of kindling apiece, while the prong-horned deer prowled among the dogies and the cowhands sat around the camp fire telling humorous stories. He taught me how to tell which way the wind was blowing, and when not to draw to a bobtailed flush, and how to light a fire with buffalo spoor. He was also full of homespun philosophy. "Women is plumb different from men," he would say, "but they cost as much to feed in the long run." "If I had fifty thousand dollars," he would say, "I wouldn't be sittin' here on this old ranch: I wouldn't be able to afford it." When I left Colorado he gave me some salt pork for the journey, and a photograph of a statue of Colonel William F. Cody by Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney.

I FOUND Colorado thick with gold and rather bumpy. It has more scenery per square inch than any other state, and to see it you have to put your head back and stare up at an angle of eighty degrees. A survey conducted in 1958 showed that out of every hundred persons in America with a pain in the neck, sixty-five had just got back from Colorado. The remainder were 50 per cent Democrats and 50 per cent Republicans. The only scenic wonder I made a point of asking to see was the Colorado Desert, but they said they'd never heard of it. I found later that it was in California all the time.

There is much to be seen apart from scenic wonders, however, and I saw it. Among other things I saw Cripple Creek, where men fought for gold with their bare hands in the days before less exhausting ways of fighting for it had been organized. In Denver I saw a Greek temple and an equestrian statue of Kit Carson. In Leadville (alt. 10,188 ft.) I encountered my first bismuth mine. I saw a face on a bar-room floor in Central City, and in the San Luis Valley I was shown the biggest



crop of cauliflowers in the country. I asked the man in charge what they did about slugs.

"Well, now," he said. "First of all we ride 'em down, and then we hog-tie 'em. Then, if the critters ain't got nobody's brand mark on 'em, we have ourselves a barbecue."

"I see," I said. "And these cauliflowers. How do they compare with the cauliflowers in Texas?"

"Texas?" he replied. "We *import* cauliflowers from Texas. They're delicacies in these here parts. Leastways,

they call 'em cauliflowers. We call 'em brussels sprouts."

The cauliflower incident also reminds me that Americans as a general rule like their food big, and preferably tasteless. To take a simple instance, if they detect the slightest flavour of bread in a loaf they will take it out at once and bury it three hundred yards from the nearest dwelling, and report the baker to the Department of Sanitation. After a while one gets used to this. I recall that on one occasion I was just starting on my second crisp roll at dinner when

my hostess learned forward and begged me not to eat the table decorations. They were plaster of Paris, she said, and had been in the family for years. As to meat, I spent a whole week in Colorado, and on the day I arrived they served me a steak. It lasted my entire stay. Each night when I got back to my hotel I'd have it sent up to my room. Then I'd sit down and try to hack another five inches off it. On the last evening, admitting defeat, I wrapped up the remaining three quarters of a pound in a towel, and hid it in the wardrobe. Then I checked out. When I got to Dallas it was waiting for me, with a note from the management.

"Sir," said the note, "you never finished your chop."

Next Week:

The Eyes of Texas are Upon You



Edward James

By JOHN BETJEMAN

THE sun that shines on Edward James
Shines also down on me
It's strange that two such simple names
Should spell such mystery.
The air he breathes, I breathe it too
But where's he now? What does he do?

On tapestries from Brussels looms
The low late 'twenties sunlight falls
In those black ceilinged Oxford rooms
And on their silver panelled walls.
ARS LONGA, VITA BREVIS EST
Was painted round them—not in jest.

And who in those days thought it odd
To liven breakfast with champagne
And watch, in Canterbury Quad,
Pale undergraduates in the rain?
For while we ate Virginia hams
Contemporaries passed exams.

Tutorials and dons there were
And tests and teams and toughs and games
But these were neither here nor there
To such as me and Edward James
We swung the incense smoke about
To drive the smells of breakfast out.

And talked of Eliot and Wilde
And Sachie's "Southern Baroque Art"
While all the time our darling child
The poem we had learn'd by heart
And wrote last night must be recited
Whether or not it were invited.

At William Morris how we laugh'd
And hairy tweeds and knitted ties—
Pub poets who in tankards quaff'd
Glared up at us with angry eyes.
For Regency before our time
We first found Cheltenham sublime.

Ah! how the trivial would enchant
On our Botanic Garden walk
To touch the tender sensitive plant
And see the fronds enfold the stalk
At each light blow our fingers dealt—
So very like ourselves we felt.

But in the end they sent me down
From that sweet hothouse world of bells
And crumbling walls of golden brown
And dotty peers and incense smells
And dinners at the George and hock
And Wytham woods and Godstow lock.

CHESTNUT GROVE

F. H. Townsend's first drawing appeared in 1904, and his last—
posthumous and unfinished—in 1920.



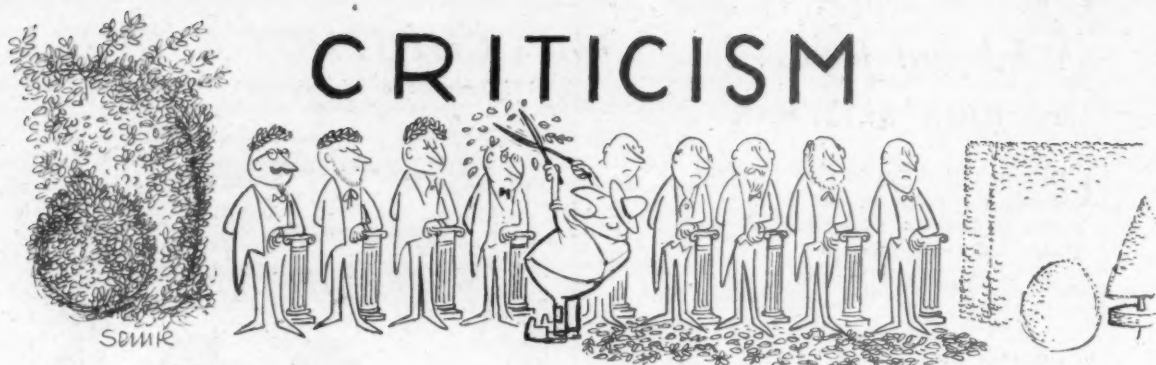
Exhilarated Visitor (leaving Club) "THE FELLER WHO CAUGHT
THAT FISH'S DEM LIAR."

March 22 1916

The sun that shone on Edward James
Shone also down on me
A prep school master teaching Games,
Maths, French, Divinity.
Harsh hand-bells harried me from sleep
For thirty pounds a term and keep.

And you continued friendly still
And wrote your verses out with care
On vellum with a coloured quill
And published them in volumes rare
Of hand-made paper bound-up fine
And then, by jove, you published mine!

They tell me you're in Mexico
They will not give me your address
But if you see these lines you'll know
I do not value you the less
For Art is long but Life must end
My early publisher and friend.



BOOKING OFFICE

Lenin & Trotsky, Ltd.

The Russian Revolution. Alan Moorehead.
Collins with Hamish Hamilton, 30/-

MR. MOOREHEAD keeps the promise made in the first sentence of his preface: he gives a "brief, simple, and straightforward account of the Russian Revolution in 1917, and the events that led up to it." He does better than that; his account is vivid and often exciting. There are clearly considerable advantages to being an excellent journalist when it comes to describing a revolution, where the pace of events changes often and unexpectedly, rumours confuse and agitate, and men are in a fever to be active often without knowing what they want to do. They act in fear or hope of one another, making guesses; they act, not as in quieter times, mostly from habit, but from calculation, and they miscalculate. Events are never less predictable and the need to think before acting never felt so deeply. The scenes are vast and shifting, and the actors are many, most of them thrust suddenly into the limelight and as suddenly cast back into darkness. To understand a revolution, to get a true impression of its course, we must see exactly when and where the decisive events happened and how they stand to one another. We must see the revolution as a whole course of events, and not as a welter, and yet it must be brought home to us how it looked to the people involved in it. It needs rare narrative skill, of a kind that professional historians seldom have, to describe a revolution and Mr. Moorehead has it abundantly. He has brought to light nothing new and important about the Russian Revolution, and has contributed nothing to controversies about it; he has merely given a lively and adequate account of it. There is no need to read anything twice

to get his meaning. There is never a temptation to look backwards, and that, presumably, is part of what is meant when it is said that an author "carries his reader along with him."

Though the book is short, parts of it could be left out without detracting anything from the account of the revolution. The long description of the clumsy murder of Rasputin does not help to explain how Czardom fell and the Bolsheviks came to power. In the chapter describing secret German contacts with the revolutionaries there is nothing to show that these contacts seriously altered the course of events. It would have been enough to say that the Germans helped Lenin to get back to Russia quickly at a time when it

mattered greatly whether he got back quickly. There are several digressions which neither spoil nor improve this short book. In themselves they are interesting and they do not mislead. Perhaps the author, when he first looked into German contacts with the Bolsheviks, hoped they would throw fresh light on the revolution; and then perhaps, this hope disappointed, he decided to add another little story to the great story he had to tell.

There are things well worth doing which Mr. Moorehead does not attempt; he says almost nothing about the social and intellectual causes of the revolution. He is more interested in men than in their doctrines, and touches only briefly on social developments. Probably he was wise to neglect these things, for the little he does say about them suggests that he has no gift for handling them. His concern is with political events, and it would be foolish to criticize him for not attempting what requires different talents from those he displays. No doubt, even within the limits of his interest, he could have been fuller; he could have painted on a broader canvas, making as coherent a picture and putting much more into it. Indeed, a larger and more crowded canvas might have been more impressive and better suited to the theme.

Mr. Moorehead is less good at describing character than complicated events. He is too free with adjectives which look striking but do not hit the mark, and says more about people than is needed to explain their behaviour or than their behaviour bears out. Too often he will not let events speak for themselves but must point to their oddity or absurdity or something else about them which is not worth noticing or is not true. His common sense and his sense of humour are sometimes obtrusive. But still he tells an excellent story, which is also a true one.

JOHN PLAMENATZ

NOVEL FACES



XL—JOHN WYNDHAM

Triffids on land and Krakens under seas
Are Wyndham's tools to make your
marrow freeze.

BLOOD COUNT

The Case of the Grinning Gorilla. Erle Stanley Gardner. *Heinemann*, 12/6. All the old gang—Perry Mason, Della Street, Paul Drake, Sergeant Holcomb and poor old District Attorney Hamilton Burger—plus some genuine gorillas to liven things up. Plenty of action, the usual court scene and (as so often), an over-complicated "solution." Not one of the better Perry Mason stories, but who cares about that? For addicts, all are irresistible.

Coffin Scarcely Used. Colin Watson. *Eyre and Spottiswoode*, 12/6. It is not every small port that can boast a newspaper proprietor, a doctor, a solicitor and an undertaker all willing to add to their incomes by immoral earnings, with murder on the side. "I find it almost incredible," said the Chief Constable, with justice, "that professional men could have taken part in a conspiracy of that kind." Mr. Colin Watson writes so well, his dialogue is so good, and his Inspector Furbright so pleasing and intelligent a character, that he ought next time to keep his plot within bounds and his corpses down to one. There is real humour and real character in this book; all it needs is credibility.

The Apologetic Tiger. James Workman. *Hodder and Stoughton*, 12/6. It was a good idea to make a hero of a retired reformatory head and send him off in pursuit of one of his "old boys" who had really gone to the bad. Mr. Workman makes amusing use of this situation and of some of the "honest crooks" who sat under Mr. Trevalyon ("I was talking to some of the girls of the class of 'forty-seven and they said if you weren't at Lyme Chapel any more they'd just as soon their children missed reformatory and went straight through to prison.") But alas! he lacks restraint. The White Slave Traffic and gas chambers in Tangier fail to thrill.

The Dire Departed. Jean Matheson. *Hodder and Stoughton*, 12/6. Miss Crimp takes a job as companion in an English village and becomes involved with an anonymous blackmailer, who has been operating in the district with conspicuous lack of subtlety for years. The local Sergeant Chope, whose great ambition is to avoid promotion and stay

where he is, is a good, original character, and might with advantage have been made the central figure. Unfortunately the flutterings and scutterings of Miss Crimp continually intervene.

Flight into Danger. John Castle and Arthur Hailey. *Souvenir Press*, 11/6. No blood here, just suspense. A civil airline from Winnipeg to Vancouver, with everything normal except that the grilled salmon for dinner was bad and one after another the passengers who had preferred it to roast lamb became seriously ill. Pilots also dine. Arthur Hailey's TV plays have made him famous, and John Castle wrote *The Password is Courage*. Together they have produced a story so intensely real and exciting that to finish it is like coming out of a cinema, after a great film, into a suburban street. The story won't let go.

The Flame of Murder. Margot Neville. *Geoffrey Bles*, 12/6. The people are more interesting than the problem in this well-written Australian story. An improbable villain, with improbable motives, and an unnecessarily dramatized ending—but one does not know about these drawbacks until the last few pages. The way there is interesting enough. Dear me, though, what emotional tangles they get into in the Australian countryside!

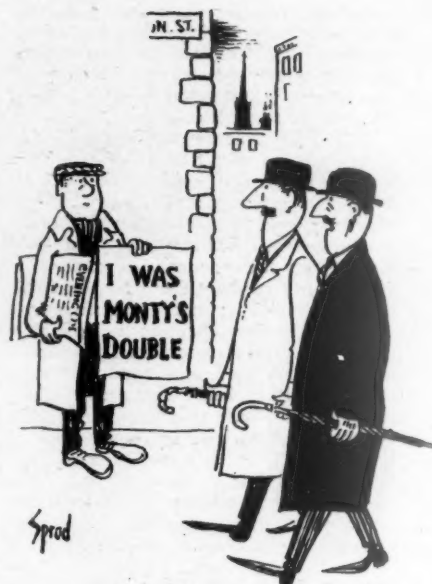
And Be a Villain. Joanna Cannan. *Gollancz*, 12/6. This is a workmanlike, straightforward murder story, better written, of course, than most, and with one of those increasingly popular inquisitive old women to solve the mystery. The official detective has a U-complex, which is something new. But why should almost all the characters be dismal or unpleasant, or both? One can always get an ordinary, non-murder novel, if one wants to be depressed.

H. F. ELLIS

The Log from the Sea of Cortez. John Steinbeck. *Heinemann*, 18/-

This record of an expedition into the Gulf of California, undertaken by the author and his great friend, the late Edward Ricketts ("It took a train to kill him"), with the object of collecting and preserving "the marine invertebrates of the littoral," is lucidly written, packed with easily absorbed information, not only about deep-sea creatures but about people and places—including a frighteningly funny sketch of an outboard motor with a malignant living personality. Also included is a lovingly-observed profile of "Doc" Ricketts himself (despite "his delicate olfactory equipment" Steinbeck saw him "literally crawl into the carcass of a basking shark to take its liver in the dark of its own body so that no light might touch it").

If there is an occasional underlying



"Nothing like the man."

suggestion of sentimental bohemianism (for instance, the fallacy that a roughly-dressed person has more "truth" in him than one who is careful about his appearance) one can only echo Ricketts's comment on Steinbeck's earlier portrait of him in *Cannery Row*: "Let it go that way. It is written in kindness. Such a thing can't be bad." J. M-R.

Play Parade, Volume Five. Noël Coward. *Heinemann*, 25/-

In his introduction to these five plays—*Pacific 1860*, "Peace in Our Time," *Relative Values*, *Quadrille* and *Blithe Spirit*—Mr. Coward attacks the modern theatre, finding it technically sloppy and sunk in Freudian humbug and despair. He remains apt to judge his own work by the length of its runs, and as sore as ever with dramatic critics who have dared to point its faults. And yet, for all his distrust of highbrow drama, there is an uneasiness in this essay lest he should go down merely as a jester.

But "Peace in Our Time" proved once more that his superb theatrical equipment was designed for the shallows, not the deep. A golden idea for a serious play, after starting strongly it dissolved into sentimental melodrama. For wit and construction *Blithe Spirit*, in line with *Hay Fever* and *Private Lives*, easily tops this collection. Mr. Coward might be less disgruntled after writing some of the best light comedies of our generation.

E. O. D. K.

Bright Weft. Cécile de Banke. *Hutchinson*, 21/-

By comparison with its near-classic predecessor, *Hand Over Hand*, this is a failure, but compared with ordinary

PUNCH ALMANACK 1939

The Almanack will be published on November 3 at 2/6d. Postal subscribers will receive a copy without application; other readers are advised to ask their newsagent to reserve a copy for them. Copies can be posted to friends overseas for 3/- each, post paid.

autobiographies, especially theatrical ones, it is quite entertaining. Writing about childhood is generally tauter than writing about a career because the intensity of experience slackens with the multiplication of experiences.

The first volume ended with the writer's leaving for South Africa. The present instalment goes from 1916 to 1929, when she was a member of a repertory company and then a teacher of elocution and allied subjects. The first impressions of the country are pictorially vivid and throughout there are plenty of amusing incidents and eccentric characters. The later chapters trail off into lists of wonderful friends, woolly generalizations about race relations and assertions of gay energy. A fuller treatment of what seems to have been pioneering in speech education would have given the book a backbone. There is a terrifying picture of the 1918 influenza epidemic and some odd local facts: women working in the fields wore men's clothes to be unattractive to baboons. R. G. G. P.

Pictures in the Fire. John Collier. *Hart-Davis*, 13/6

It is too long since we had a new collection of Mr. Collier's stories. He is a delicate ironist who runs us headlong into fantasy almost before we know it; but without whimsy, for even his wildest plots are skilfully anchored in ordinary life. Most of the twenty-three items in this volume are brief, preparing the way cunningly for a surprise ending. In so gentle a writer, who leans towards the lyrical, it is curious that no fewer than nine deal with murder, attempted murder or sudden death. The elimination of a wife or husband by a dissatisfied partner is a strangely recurring theme.

In spite of its domestic note the range is wide, covering England, America and France. One of the neatest stories is about an elderly female cat who tyrannizes a small French port. Occasionally Mr. Collier finds himself out on a limb, as with his flea that becomes a film star, but even here there is wit. E. O. D. K.

AT THE PLAY

Mister Venus (PRINCE OF WALES)
Uncle Dundo (BELGRADE THEATRE,
COVENTRY)

The Polish Mime Company (PRINCES)

THE mild plot that runs through *Mister Venus*, of a planetary ambassador sent to teach us love of a platonic and social order, gives Frankie Howerd one good scene, where as the visitor's executive agent he turns a wild mass-meeting at Marble Arch into a summer idyll. After that he is better without the plot, in a series of music-hall sketches, some of which suit him excellently. As an intruder blundering round a live TV studio like a bewildered bull he is wonderfully funny, and again disguised as a nanny and pursued by desperate

spies in Hyde Park. Having survived a drunk scene at the American Embassy he is arrested and paralyzes a court by conducting his own case and interrogating himself as chief witness. In these lunacies Mr. Howerd is very much at home, and one suspects his gags are his own. After him the honours in this brassy popular musical go to Paddy Stone and Irving Davies, whose inventive and witty choreography seems to come from a much more sophisticated entertainment, and to a very agile chorus, beautifully drilled. Any revue, for instance, would be glad of the airport scene, in which different nationalities express their special quirks in ballet.

Uncle Dundo was a rich and terribly stingy miser in Dubrovnik who sent his playboy son with five thousand ducats to start a business in Rome. It took this thick-headed financier three years to begin to wonder why his boy had never written home, and when at last he catches up with him he finds exactly what might have been expected. The most glamorous courtesan in the city under contract. A rich wardrobe from the Via Savilia. A fastidious taste in the finest wines, and of course impending ruin. At the same moment, presumably by a different route, the boy's betrothed also arrives in

Rome, dressed as a gallant and accompanied by a nurse with a deficient sense of security. This is Rome in the sixteenth century, a period in which valets, in spite of being beaten every five minutes, had the final say.

And this is *Uncle Dundo*, by Marin Drzic, an early flower of the Yugoslavian theatre, who died just as Shakespeare was renouncing his perambulator. It is a bustling farce in the tradition of *commedia dell'arte*, and it reminds one of Goldoni, though to me he was a good deal funnier. For any repertory company it would be a tough proposition; the words are less important than the opportunities for mime. In their beautiful and exciting new theatre at Coventry the cast of the Belgrade make a brave shot at it (in English), produced by a Yugoslavian, Dr. Marko Fotez. As the leading valet, acting as a kind of compère, Henry Manning bears the chief burden lightly and amusingly; John Ringham is a sound *Dundo* and Patsy Byrne and Richard Martin play up with spirit for the servants' hall. Vladimir Jedrinsky's decorations are charming.

The Polish Mime Company from Wroclaw takes life seriously, indeed a little gloomily. It is fairly accomplished, but there is none of the inspired frivolity



Mister Venus—ANTON DIFFRING

Alister—FRANKIE HOWERD

[*Mister Venus*]

that distinguishes Marcel Marceau. The programme consists of five set pieces, and opens with a folk allegory of the fall of man that becomes less and less easy to follow. Much better is the mime taken from Gogol's story of the battered clerk whose ambition centres crazily on a new overcoat, and who loses all hold on life when it is stolen. In this Henryk Tomaszewski, who leads the visitors, gives us skilfully the clerk's humiliation, his brief joy and the final extinction of his spirit.

A sketch from *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, in which Jerzy Fornal excels as the frustrated priest, is more effective than the lighter one where the

REP SELECTION

Queen's Theatre, Hornchurch, *Dear Delinquent*, until November 8th.
Leatherhead Theatre, *Variation on a Theme*, until November 1st.
Bromley Rep., *Any Other Business*, until November 1st.
Colchester Rep., *September Tide*, until November 1st.

differing reactions of four readers of an erotic novel are illustrated. This sounds a good idea, but the performances are not funny enough to stave off monotony. In spite of a reasonable skill in mime this company is weak in comedy, and the impression it leaves is of solid but rather solemn work.

Recommended

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)
Valmouth (Lyric, Hammersmith—8/10/58), for fans of Ronald Firbank.
Roar Like a Dove (Phoenix—2/10/58) and *Not in the Book* (Criterion—16/4/58), both good comedies, the latter a thriller as well.

ERIC KEOWN

AT THE PICTURES

I Was Monty's Double
The Barbarian and the Geisha

MUCH of the appeal of *I Was Monty's Double* (Director: John Guillermin) rests on the tested dramatic device that may be described as the Look-be'ind-ye'r situation. That is the warning proverbially bellowed by the simple stage audience to an unsuspecting hero about to be coshed: they know something he doesn't know, and—this is the point—the fact gratifies them. In a way, the whole of the film is based on this situation, and incidental examples of it turn up again and again; for the whole idea is that a large number of the people concerned think that the central figure is General Montgomery, while the audience is delightedly aware that, in fact, it is Lieutenant Clifton James.

Moreover the part is played, and very creditably, by Mr. Clifton James himself, who really did play it in North Africa in 1944, with the aim of misleading the enemy about the place of the forthcoming



[I Was Monty's Double

Corporal Walker : General Montgomery—CLIFTON JAMES

invasion of Europe. The story dresses up the facts a bit, and particularly I regret that it should add an imaginary kidnapping-and-rescue episode to make a "stronger" (=more conventional) climax. On paper this would no doubt seem a final crescendo of excitement, but in fact it turns out to be considerably less effective than most of what leads up to it. There is a falling-off, because a more obvious note of artificiality than there has been in any of the early scenes.

These have had their artificial moments, goodness knows. The pair of M.I.5 officers whose job it is to carry through the deception and coach the diffident lieutenant in his job are the perennial gay types of the British war film, with no more depth as characters, and only a touch more credibility, than the R.A.F. pair typified during the war by Murdoch and Horne. John Mills and Cecil Parker are amusing as these personages, but it's impossible to believe they are really taking the whole business any more seriously than we are, as they exchange badinage and facetious looks about the behaviour of secretaries, or people in trains or whatever. Nevertheless the situation is in itself strong, and the minor climaxes of suspense (will the man who met Montgomery before realize that this is an impersonator?) come off very effectively.

It is continuously interesting to watch Mr. James as he develops his imitation, which becomes astoundingly like the original. The weakest scene I think is that showing him giving a pep-talk to a tough military audience full of Americans; he seems to rouse them to enthusiasm too easily. But as a whole the picture is

a success, and enjoyable, without benefit of the reflection that it is based on fact.

The most baffling thing about *The Barbarian and the Geisha* (Director: John Huston) is the name of the director. What is this notable film-maker doing in charge of something a great deal of which is written as a sort of illustrated lecture?

It is the story, in essentials presumably true, of Townsend Harris, in 1856 the first diplomatic representative of the West to be allowed, very grudgingly indeed, to stay in what was then the "Forbidden Empire" of Japan. The trouble is that it is nearly all narrated by the Geisha (Eiko Ando) craftily introduced into his house as a spy by the local governor. Time and again, when we ought to be seeing what happens direct, we simply hear her soft voice telling us about it, while the screen shows us a momentary silent illustration. We do see certain of the more dramatic incidents, and a great many shots of Harris (John Wayne) looking with interest and curiosity at beautiful or quaint Japanese phenomena; but far too much of the story is told in words—either the Geisha's words, or the words of argument between Harris and the local governor or the Shogun's assembly—argument, moreover, one side of which we don't even grasp until it is translated for us by his interpreter. It is all nice to look at, and no doubt it will make good propaganda in Japan, but not even John Huston can make a real film of it.

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

An outstanding new one in London is the Swedish *Wild Strawberries*, which

is showing with Basil Wright's attractive colour documentary about Greece, *The Immortal Land*; review next week. *The Cranes are Flying* (24/9/58), *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* (22/10/58) and *The Hunters* (22/10/58) continue.

Not a distinguished lot of releases. Of the three that were press-shown, the only one reviewed here was *Passionate Summer* (8/10/58), which has lovely pictures (Kingston, Jamaica) but leans too heavily on dialogue.

RICHARD MALLETT

AT THE GALLERY

Consolation Prize

SIMULTANEOUSLY with the mighty sounding of trumpets which accompanied the sale of a few first-class French, late nineteenth-century pictures at Sotheby's, a magnificent consolation prize was awarded to the financially uninterested art-lover—the opening of the new Courtauld Institute Galleries (Woburn Square, W.C.1: open free every day).

The late Samuel Courtauld's French pictures, forty-two in number, include Manet's "Bar at the Folies Bergère"—his last important work—and a small version of the "Déjeuner sur l'Herbe"; half a dozen Cézannes of the finest quality, among them his view of Lake Annecy; a moving Van Gogh landscape; and two Gauguins which presage that master's influence on Matisse. These pictures will be familiar to many who saw some of them at the old Courtauld house in Portman Square and others dotted about in the National Gallery or the Tate Gallery. Their being brought together in their new permanent home convincingly demonstrates the sure taste of the collector.

Partner with Mr. Courtauld in this generous enterprise was the late Lord Lee, whose collection covers the fourteenth-eighteenth centuries. Collecting in the 'twenties Lord Lee had to face, for what he wanted, relatively fiercer financial competition than did Mr. Courtauld. Of this very valuable acquisition I most enjoyed Lely's group of musicians "An Idyll," and the Morelli-Nerli Cassoni, two magnificent Italian chests, carved, and decorated with paintings. Eighty choice old master drawings from the late Sir Robert Witt's vast collection and a room containing that of the late Roger Fry are further contributions to this admirable place.

At Agnew's "Recent Acquisitions" I heard someone say "Ben Marshall [two equestrian works] has such a feeling for light and space he could well have been purely a landscape painter"; as for Agasse, the animal painter (1767-1849), the silkiness of his "Leopards" prompted a conjecture that Renoir would have liked it. In a most varied show Salvator Rosa's "The Death of Regulus" is so replete with fine passages of painting that

it should, ideally, become the property of an academy or art school which still ranks technical achievement high.

ADRIAN DAINTREY

ON THE AIR

Awkward Squad

IT always seems to me that Don Carter and Ginger Smart in "Shadow Squad" (A-R) earn their money very easily. They are, respectively, a private investigator (Peter Williams) and his assistant (George Moon)—the age-old combination of the Sexton Blake figure and the Tinker figure—and they form the squad of the title. It pleases me to hope that, as their business thrives, they will add to their numbers a secretary and a boy to make the tea, so that the name of their organization can be altered to "Shadow Battalion."

Like all such humdrum fantasies (and, heaven knows, they come bouncing off the ionosphere by the dozen these days) the series is based on the idea that private investigators are handsome, powerful men who solve mysteries. Now this preposterous fallacy is a perfectly legitimate peg on which to hang tales of detection, but my quarrel with "Shadow Squad" is that it offers us precious little detection at all. It usually presents us with some such question as "Which of these people is systematically poisoning the old man's tropical fish?" Don Carter is given the job of finding out, and we sit back expecting some marvels of sleuthing. But all that happens is that he and his insufferable, sniggering

assistant stand about exchanging meaning looks while the other members of the cast bring the story to its foregone conclusion. Carter will occasionally stir himself out of his brooding, aristocratic stupor in order to deliver himself of a piece of elementary deduction—"I don't know whether you've m-noticed, m-Ginger, but Mr. Anstruther is m-totally blind, and could hardly have shot Mrs. Ormskirk at a distance of m-two hundred m-yards."—"By George, guv, you're right there. Heh heh! Makes you think, don't it, eh? Heh heh!"—but for the most part he simply lounges about looking like the leading man in a tour of *Rebecca*, taking the greatest care with his diction and permitting only the barest minimum of expression (inscrutable, quizzical or superior) to disturb the grave calm of his features. Ginger, meanwhile, is smoking cigars, nervously trying to toss a coin like George Raft in *Scarface*, and supplying comic relief of the most excruciating nature. (He also fumbles a line now and then; if I'm any judge, but one doesn't mention things like that: it isn't playing the game: standards were lowered several notches as soon as television was invented, and I know of one critic who has gone so far as to praise the acting of Bernard Braden in his "Personal Playhouse.")

Finally, I object to the odious relationship which seems to exist between Carter and Ginger. They are as cosily chummy as a couple of hockey girls—although one is never allowed to forget that under all the shoulder-patting and fond smiles Mr. Carter is a posh gentleman and Ginger is a boot-licking lackey (a reformed lag, if you must know) who must always remember in time to touch his forelock.

I have so far been disappointed by the "Australian Walkabout" series (BBC). I had looked forward to a fascinating introduction to this curious land, but there is a halting, foggy, old-fashioned air about this attempt to show its wonders, with more than a suggestion of "Next slide, please." It is high time, too, that husband-and-wife explorer teams curbed their enthusiasm for appearing before the cameras. None of them shows the least capacity for acting, and with film the price it is to-day they would be better advised to keep their lenses pointed at the landscape.

This reminds me of Alan Melville's nicely sharpened jab at Armand and Michaela in the first instalment of his new A-Z series (BBC). The show itself is another of the monstrously self-conscious devices for assembling a group of entertainers. Why do the TV big-wigs so often feel obliged to manufacture some complicated excuse for presenting a variety show? Still, it is usually a delight to see and hear the sugar-coated acid of Mr. Melville's own work. I wish he would curtail his coy compèring and leave time for more of his catty sketches.

HENRY TURTON





"Next, a simple tourniquet."

Surplus to Requirements

By ANDREW MILLAR

WHEN I was a young man seeking my fortune I started in the Government surplus game. For many years this was an uncomplicated business of buying at as low a price as possible large quantities of goods which the taxpayer had paid for and then selling them to the same taxpayer so as to achieve the greatest possible profit.

Just lately, however, two factors have emerged which have made the business more hazardous. The first of these is the growth of advertising in this field and the increasing difficulty of finding superlatives for use in advertising claims. The second, and much more

serious factor, is the increased range of surplus goods available and the consequent widening of the range of contents of lots put up for auction by the Ministry of Supply.

It was the second factor which landed us in our present predicament. My colleagues and I had gone down to the depot at Much Sloedown to buy a few thousand left-foot Wellington boots which were surplus to Ministry requirements. Unfortunately when they came up for sale they had been bundled together with four atomic power stations (unfuelled). We held an on-the-spot conference and decided we were justified in taking a chance on getting rid of them,

especially in view of the anticipated demand for the boots. In fact since the other dealers were less optimistic than us, we got boots and stations for no more than the opening bars of a modern popular song.

Back in town the boots went their appointed way and we concentrated all our efforts on disposing of the power stations.

Looking back I'm sure we were on the wrong tack from the start. We would have been far safer trying to off-load them in the property market, but we had no experience of that at the time. Instead we decided on an irresistible appeal to budding scientists, and accordingly



HARGREAVES

inserted a square in the Saturday editions of the major national papers:

"BOYS! BOYS! BOYS!

A super atomic reactor station of your very own!

Pals and dads will also enjoy this exciting new hobby!

Occupies only 150 acres (excluding safety zones).

Send only £4 19s. 6d. Balance in 400 monthly payments of £5.

HURRY! HURRY! HURRY!"

When we came to analyse the reasons for the lack of response to this ad. it was suggested that we hadn't made the stations exclusive enough. Therefore we ran the squares again for another four weeks, varying the description to "Genuine ex-Chief Scientist type atomic power stations" or "Atomic power stations—as used by Canadian Scientific Officers."

The response was still poor.

Our next idea was to try to get rid of them, as we had bought them, in conjunction with other lines. This produced

"Superior quality fur-lined anti-radiation suits!

Genuine U.S. government surplus stock!

As worn by moon-rocket men:

Only £2 1s. 6d. and 12 monthly payments of £2.

(NOTE.—The first four orders for over 1,000 suits will receive an atomic power station at the special rate of £1,999)."

When we finished packing the suits we still had four cut-price power stations on our hands.

The Board (i.e. the Guv'nor and his wife) took an interest after this and at their direction we switched our attack to the Personal Columns.

"Gentleman (ex-public school) obliged dispose four atomic power stations. Mint condition. Cheap for quick sale. Box—."

This brought in two requests for donations to the Distressed Electricians

and Powermen's Benevolent Fund and a pamphlet on the Preservation of Welsh Islands, but didn't really achieve our object.

It was only at this point that we decided to enter the property market. Since we had buildings but no land we had some difficulty in finding agents to accept our commission, but eventually Messrs. Flank, Syde and Beamish (est. 1827) agreed to act for us.

They put a great deal of thought into their advertisement and eventually the more serious Sundays carried:

"MODERN BUILDINGS IN SAXON ROUND-HOUSE STYLE.

A few of these delightful buildings are available for persons wishing to build their own unusual country residence. When erected the building is on three floors and consists of large entrance hall (130 ft. by 90 ft.), superb kitchen (cooking facilities for 450), 2 bath. (containing 36 fitted baths and showers), 11 separate W.C., and 15 misc. recep., playrooms, studies, etc., together with approx. 95 beds (single and double). In the centre and rising through all three floors is a cylindrical space which would take a magnificent spiral staircase. Many extras incl. all steel fire escapes, steam siren, etc. Details of—"

We came close to success with this approach, but there was a slump in shipping freight rates at the vital point during negotiations and the prospect backed out.

The only other suggestion that has been mooted is that we should present the power stations to employees completing forty years' service, instead of a gold watch. If this is adopted we shall only need to find storage space for them for the next nineteen years. Do you have any ideas on how we set about this?

Or better still, can anyone use the services of an experienced buyer who is, owing to reorganization, shortly going to be surplus to requirements?

FOR THE PRESENT

YOU'LL have noticed that Christmas comes round faster each year. Yet fifty-two issues of PUNCH still manage to squeeze through the narrowing gap. A comforting thought? A brake on a whirling world? Don't keep it to yourself. Make PUNCH the 1958 Christmas Present for your most deserving friend, to count off the weeks of 1959 at leisure. Send us the name and address and we will do the rest, including Greetings from you, timed for The Day. Subscriptions: Great Britain and Eire £2 16s.; Canada (by Canadian Magazine Post) £2 10s. (\$7.25); Elsewhere Overseas £3 (U.S.A. \$9.00)

Write to: Department ED., PUNCH, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4. U.S.A. and Canadian readers may remit by cheques on their own banks. Other overseas readers should consult their bankers or remit by postal money order.

Essence of



Parliament

LADIES' WEEK in the Lords. There had, it seems, been a word sent round by Lord St. Aldwyn, the Government Chief Whip, to ask as many Lords as possible to show up to see the Ladies take their seats, and almost a hundred obeyed this command—"The best House we've had," said a lugubrious peer, "since the Hanging Bill." It seems, it is true, that two hundred and thirty-four peers have asked for leave of absence to excuse them from coming to the House at all, but it would be ungallant to assume that that was just because of the women. After all, they never used to come even when they had only men to look at.

Peers make good losers. It is lucky for them that they do, seeing that these days they almost always lose. Die-hards die hard, and even those who had prophesied inevitable calamity if ever a woman put her nose inside an Upper Chamber were prepared to do the gallant in face of the inevitable, and no one was found so unmannerly as to mar the welcome to the women when they came. The women in their black three-cornered hats and black velvet suits beneath the scarlet and ermine robes came and duly did their stuff—Lady Wootton and Lady Swanborough

(for thus the conventions of Parliamentary life disguise her whom the City knew as the Dowager Marchioness of Reading) on Tuesday, and Lady Elliot and Lady Ravensdale on Wednesday. All went off without a hitch, unless hitch it be for Lady Wootton to prefer an affirmation to an oath. The women did everything just as if they were men except that they drew the line at taking off their hats. The male lords were in generous mood and rolls of appreciative hear, hears, followed their ladyships back to their newly-created Powder

Chamber and beyond. Peeresses and life peers took their seats—all except Lord Boothby, who does not like to be no more than one of ten pebbles on the beach, and who reserved his oath to a more unique occasion.

It was a little surprising after all this feminism that three newly-created life peers but only one peeress, Lady Elliot, should have turned up to see the House prorogued on Thursday. If Tuesday and Wednesday had been impressive enough, Thursday was comic relief with a vengeance. Gosh, how funny lords are when they dress up! The five commissioners—reading from left to right, Lords Samuel, Salisbury, Kilmuir, Selkirk, and Alexander—whose names, as Dante Rossetti would have said, are five sweet symphonies, straggled in, all dressed up like something in

Through the Looking Glass. These performances are funny enough when everything goes right and funnier still when everything goes wrong. Lord Selkirk and Lord Alexander somehow got their robes all tied up with one another and an attendant had to rally round to unwind the noble cocoons. Truly enough

there was no farce playing in London to touch it. It would have been funny even without the Prorogation Speech thrown in to turn it into a riot; but after that, with all its bowing and scraping and doffing of solemn hats when every name was mentioned, there was not a dry eye in the Gallery.

To round the whole business all off it only needed the Sergeant-at-Arms to swing the mace up to his shoulder with so smart a cant as almost to clout Lord Terrington one on the boko, and felicity was complete. Good heavens!

why should there not be women in the House of Lords? *Hamlet* without the Prince of Denmark? All these years we have been trying to play *Through the Looking Glass* without the Red Queen. No wonder that it has not worked. It is just the place for women. Let us hope that all will now be remedied. But I am, I confess, a bit

nervous about this television. Women and television within the space of one week—can the public take them both? Not very many people have ever seen the lords dressed up. Not very many people have any conception how absurd they look. I am a bit apprehensive of

the effect of the revelations of the television camera. It is a strange, a paradoxical, and an unpopular view, but my fear is that there are some things in heaven and earth, Horatio, too absurd even to be shown on television. Let us hope that the camera will have kept itself fairly firmly fixed on the Speech and the Throne and that its roving eye will not have turned too much to the more casual back benches. There is one woman at any rate who, if she should find herself crowded out from the ceremony, will want to know the reason why, and that is Mrs. Brad-dock; for while the Lords were proroguing in a less controversial fashion she in the Commons was calling on heaven for vengeance about the way in which the ballot for seats had been conducted, and the Speaker seemed prepared to admit that there was something in what she said.

PERCY SOMERSET

☆

"Even if you're not as lovely as this wide-eyed beauty you could probably make quite a hit at a party with this black velvet brow belt decorated with its pendant jewel. Make it yourself."—*A Fashion Piece*

We *always* make our own hits, thanks.



Baroness Swanborough



Baroness Wootton of Abinger



In the City

One Million Cars

WHERE in the world are we going to put all the cars whose glistening representatives are now on show at Earls Court? For the first time the British car industry is expected this year to top the one million units mark and the plans and confident hopes are that the record will be broken again next year.

Admittedly, close on half of the British car industry's output has recently been exported. Overseas sales this year are expected to bring in the stupendous total of £500 million to reinforce an already very solid balance-of-payments surplus; but if the industry is to retain its present share of the export markets—it is now an impressive 30 per cent—it must wage its export battle from the secure basis of a healthy domestic market. This is not easy in a country where the tax on new cars is higher than anywhere else in the world and where the comparative expenditure on new roads is lower than in any other civilized country.

Mr. Reay Geddes, President of the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders, and a managing director of the Dunlop Rubber Co., told us last week of the danger of regarding the industry merely as a goose laying the golden eggs of export earnings, or as a milch cow yielding an unending and growing source of tax revenue. There were other animals in Mr. Geddes's well-filled metaphorical zoo, but the collective cry that emerged from it was a warning that this magnificent industry, which has done so much to uphold the prosperity of Britain in the post-war years, cannot hope to maintain this performance unless the handicaps it has to bear in its competition with others are reduced.

Two comparisons will serve to illustrate this burden.

The purchase tax on new cars here in Britain is 60 per cent of the wholesale price; in Germany the turnover tax, which is levied at several stages in the

chain of distribution, amounts approximately to 12 per cent of the retail price. In Britain the expenditure on new roads in 1955-56 was £12,900,000. In Germany it was the equivalent of £133,400,000.

Hopes of a reduction in the purchase tax must probably be deferred until the next Budget; but at long last there are indications that the long neglect of the road-building programme—it goes back to the 1930s and the periodic raiding of the Road Fund—is at last coming to an end. Mr. Harold Watkinson, the Minister of Transport, declared recently that the biggest programme that the country could afford would be maintained "not with a four-year or even an eight-year concept, but as a continuing constructive effort until the country's roads are adequate to its needs."

The most intriguing item in the present proposals is the building of about three and a half miles of connecting link between the motorways converging on Birmingham on a viaduct which is to be built above the railway line along the outskirts of that city. Here is the germ of what may become the ultimate solution of our motor roads programme. We have recently heard a great deal about Parkinson's Law. Why not Watkinson's Law: "Where there is a railway track there is a road"? To build viaduct roads over our main railway lines may in the end prove far more economical in congested areas than the acquisition of land and the destruction of existing property. Incidentally, the rental would be one way in which nationalized railways might be got out of the red.

Whatever the techniques there must be more and better roads. The recognition of this fact and the response to the £240 million four-year programme has been a justifiable rise in road-making shares on the Stock Exchange. Among the likely beneficiaries of this programme are such companies as Limmer and Trinidad, Neuchatel Asphalte, Tarmac and Val de Travers. Among the contractors that will play their part in this programme, mention should be made of Costains. In spite of their increasing commitments overseas (the group has just secured a £1 million contract for a home-ownership scheme for South Africans at Lusaka in Northern Rhodesia) they are the kind of organization whose civil engineering division will be called into service to build the roads on which this profusion of new cars can be promised a modicum of mobility and a chance to show off the speeds of which they are capable.

LOMBARD LANE



In the Country

"Ware haunch, ware fox"

MUCH as the Life Guards and the Blues have survived their apotheosis, one might suppose that hunting would survive the protection of its quarry. If the hunting of red deer were proscribed, might the moor not still resound to the sound of the horn and music of hounds? And if Charles James were to receive a like degree of freedom from anxiety, would the shires not still shake to the thunder of hooves?

Indeed, to the tidy mind the drag-hunt has always had a special appeal; many a fox-hunter sees little of hounds and less of the fox, as things are.

Dainty, Daphne, Dauntless and Delicate, Fatal, Fearnought, Ranter and Rallywood, would still grace the village green, though the earth-stopper would take his pension to his cottage and the grass would wither on Beckford's grave. The law would prevent the recurrence of anything like the finish which took place in an ornamental dairy during the last century, when the pack

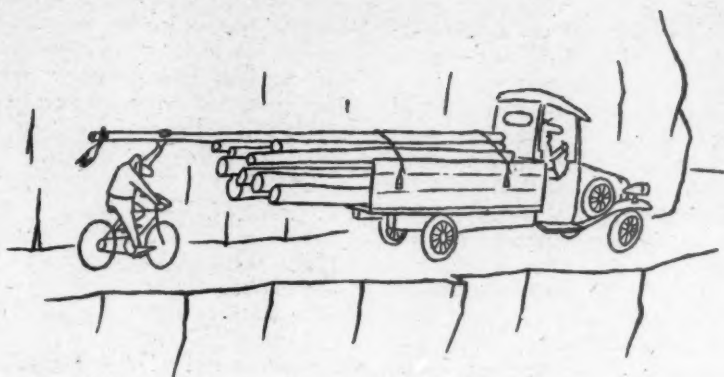
"All heedless of the damsel's scream,
First ate the fox—then drank the cream."

No doubt, the fox having ceased to fly before hounds, hounds would in due course cease to be a necessary part of the process, relieving Hunt staff of much of their work; and it might even be that the horse would cease to be a necessary adjunct, saving grooms a good deal of trouble and enabling saddlers' shops to be put to better use.

It may be, of course, that the object of the people referred to (in print only) as the "anti-hunting fraternity" is to put down the hunter, rather than protect the hunted; to remove red coats and blue and buff coats, coats green and yellow, forever from the rural scene.

Perhaps the scream of "Tallyho!" with its awful undertones of privilege, should be muted. The huntsman, when he hits off the line, should remember that his foxes may be numbered, keep his horn in his case and leave his "gone away" to be inferred, and take care that he does not blow "the rattle" at the final worry.

JOHN SEDGWICK



My dear Alderman . . .

By R. G. G. PRICE

A Public School Fights Back

MY unfortunate colleague the headmaster who had your son at Station Road County Primary School tells me you took an active part in their Parent-Teacher Association. I gather from your letter that now your son has been accepted by a public school you expect to carry on in much the same way here. Not on your life. Our greatest asset in the public schools, after the size and quality of our staffs, is the hoity-toity attitude we are able to take towards parents. The form it assumes depends on the parent; you, for example, are obviously a man on whom polished insults would be wasted. Free from local interference and ruled only by governors consisting of able men who are too busy to turn up and useful rich men who are stupid enough to be manageable, we live very comfortably while most of British Education is being pestered and ruined by amateurish interference—unlike British Surgery or British Chemistry or British Law.

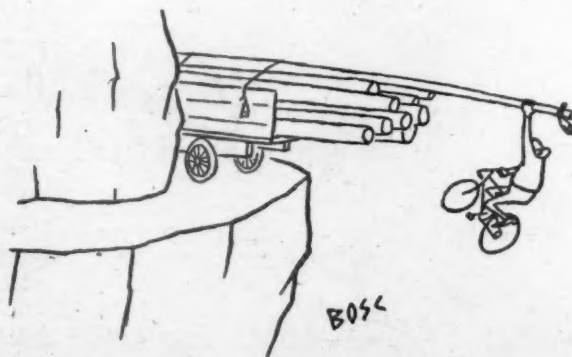
You say that you are angry that the Labour Party will not abolish the public schools but that until they do you will allow your son to attend one, because in a capitalist society all the good jobs go to public school boys. As an ex-Labour-candidate I know far more about Socialism than you seem to and I agree with the leaders of the party that at the moment the public schools are an irreplaceable asset. It will be many years

before any comprehensive school can provide such a reservoir of ability as Winchester. To people like you the public schools are a scapegoat. The delegate to the Labour Party Conference who never manages to persuade his fellow delegates to elect him to the executive hates to admit that it may be his own deficiencies which keep him off the platform. He remembers that many of the more effective Labour Ministers were educated at public schools so he snarls to the other failures that the Labour Party is as much of a racket as the Tories. The speeches at Scarborough in favour of smashing the public schools were much more fervent than the speeches in favour of smaller classes in State schools.

Like many of the vaguer and less

valuable members of the party you cannot make up your mind whether the public schools are so good that every boy should have a chance of going to one or so bad that no boy should. I believe they are good schools and that the success of their old boys in competitive professions proves it. You seem, indeed, to be anxious for your son to take advantage of a world in which a good share of the best jobs goes to old boys of public schools—which include, may I remind you, Shrewsbury and Newcastle-under-Lyme High School and Charterhouse and Pontypool West Monmouth School and Harrow and Wallasey Grammar. These are all public schools, as indeed are Markham College, Lima, and the English School, Heliopolis. The public school boys who win scholarships to Oxford and Cambridge and pass high into the Civil Service include very many poor boys who began by winning free places. The statistics which you quote do not distinguish between public school boys whose fathers were at public schools and those who, like you and me, began in State schools.

Many public schools were grammar schools which were so much better than most grammar schools that they were invited to become public schools before the list was closed. I suppose the idea of closing it was to avoid dilution so that the proud name could continue to represent quality. Instead, this created a rarity value. What the Labour Party ought to do is to insist that the list should be reopened. There is plenty of brain in Britain to fill many more public schools. I know that really you are not thinking of public schools as a whole at all. You are smarting under the



gay arrogance of Winchester, under the Wykhamist habit of either winning all the prizes or suggesting that to compete for them is rather a second-rate thing to do. You are thinking of half a dozen schools which you imagine to be a combination of Greyfriars and White's, filled with sons of peers who wear top-hats and write Latin verse and hunt as a preparation for being diplomats and merchant bankers. There are several things wrong with these; but even if boys who ought to be in them are not, very few boys who ought not to be in them are, because most entrance examinations are so stiff. The teaching the fee-paying parent buys is no longer old-fashioned and it is well above the head of what, I think on page five, you refer to as "gilded numskulls." In cases where grandfather owns a slice of a business and puts his Etonian grandson in as a director, this is family privilege and financial privilege, not educational privilege, though often mistaken for it. Anyway, if you are going to have jobs for the boys you might as well see that the boys are as well educated as possible. If the sons of the crude tycoons of the Industrial Revolution had not been, the condition of England in the later nineteenth century might have been much worse.

The training we give our boys is

tough, and since we are a boarding-school they get it all the time—one of the advantages that boarding schools have over day schools that is reflected in their results. We pick clever boys and we press them to the limit intellectually, socially, athletically and increasingly aesthetically. It does them no harm—man needs to respond to challenges—and they mature a couple of years ahead of the products of schools that are more easily satisfied. This gives them a good lead; but they have worked for it. The country can use all the clever boys it can produce and every single citizen benefits from their use. The real trouble is that you are afraid of finding yourself jealous of your son and you cannot make up your mind to let him find his own level. You want a job for him that will reflect creditably on you; but you want to be able to damp down his intellectual activity, deter him from reading harder books than you can read and keep him within the narrow limits of your own interests. You would prefer to have him at a day-school, for him not to get much homework and for him to spend his time aimlessly at home rather than purposefully in clubs and societies at school. Well, you are not going to. Our programme for your boy is not just to make him a better man than his father;

that would be setting our target much too low. It is to make him a better man than previous generations of public school men. And that we are sufficiently independent of you to do.

Hallowe'en

THE corpse-lights flicker on the marsh,
The old grey stones stand stiff and proud;
The hag-browed wind is hoarse and harsh,
The mirthless rushes laugh aloud.

Now is the time, the locals tell,
The phantom huntsman on his nag
Rides from the churchyard past The Bell,
Bearing what body in a bag

None of them knows; but such he bears.
When from The Bell they seek their beds
The canny men go home in pairs
And wrap the blankets round their heads.

Not that they grant the tale belief;
But there it is, the air strikes chill,
The mist is thick, and life is brief—
No need to make it briefer still.

R. P. LISTER



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Reg'd at the G.P.O. as a Newspaper. Entered as 2nd-class Mail Matter at the New York, N.Y., P.O., 1903. Postage of this issue: Gt. Britain and Eire 2½d.; Canada 1d.* Elsewhere Overseas 3½d.† Mark Wrapper top left-hand corner "Canadian Magazine Post" † Printed Papers—Reduced Rate.

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